

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Colorado River Indian Tribes Region



2020 NEEDS AND ASSETS REPORT

Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Partnership Council

2020 Needs & Assets Report

Prepared by

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Funded by

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Introduction

Ninety percent of a child's brain growth occurs before kindergarten and the quality of a child's early experiences impacts whether their brain will develop in positive ways that promote learning. First Things First (FTF) was created by Arizonans to help ensure that Arizona children have the opportunity to arrive at kindergarten prepared to be successful. Understanding the critical role the early years play in a child's future success is crucial to our ability to foster each child's optimal development and, in turn, impact all aspects of wellbeing of our communities and our state.

This Needs and Assets Report for the FTF Colorado River Indian Tribes Region helps community leaders and decision-makers understand the needs of young children, the resources available to meet those needs and gaps that may exist in those resources. Data collection and analysis for the 2020 report were completed prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and, therefore, do not reflect the impact of COVID-19 on families with young children and the services that support them. The report is organized by topic areas pertinent to young children in the region, such as the population characteristics or educational indicators. Within each topic area are sections that set the context for why the data found in the topic areas are important (Why it Matters), followed by a section that includes available data on the topic (What the Data Tell Us).

The FTF Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Partnership Council recognizes the importance of investing in young children and ensuring that families and caregivers have options when it comes to supporting the healthy development of young children in their care. It is our sincere hope that this information also will help guide community conversations about how we can best support school readiness for all children in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region. To that end, this information may be useful to stakeholders in the area as they work to enhance the resources available to young children and their families and as they make decisions about how best to support children birth to 5 years old throughout the region.

Acknowledgements

The FTF Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Council wants to thank the Arizona Department of Economic Security, the Arizona Department of Health Services, the Arizona Department of Education and the U.S. Census Bureau, for their contributions of data for this report and their ongoing support and partnership with FTF on behalf of young children.

To the current and past members of the Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Council, your vision, dedication and passion have been instrumental in improving outcomes for young children and families within the region. Our future efforts will build upon those successes with the ultimate goal of building a comprehensive early childhood system for the betterment of young children within the region and the entire state.

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

May 8, 2020

Message from the Chair:

Since the inception of First Things First, the Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Partnership Council has taken great pride in supporting evidence-based and evidence informed early childhood programs that are improving outcomes for young children. Through both funded and unfunded approaches, the early childhood programs and services supported by the regional council have strengthened families, improved the quality of early learning, and enhanced the health and well-being of children birth to 5 years old in our community.

This impact would not have been possible without data to guide our discussions and decisions. One of the primary sources of that data is our regional Needs and Assets report, which provides us with information about the status of families and young children in our community, identifies the needs of young children, and details the supports available to meet those needs. Along with feedback from families and early childhood stakeholders, the report helps us to prioritize the needs of young children in our area and determine how to leverage First Things First resources to improve outcomes for young children in our communities.

The Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Council would like to thank our Needs and Assets vendor, Harder and Company, for their knowledge, expertise and analysis of the Colorado River Indian Tribes region. Their partnership has been crucial to our development of this report and to our understanding of the extensive information contained within these pages.

As we move forward, the First Things First Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Partnership Council remains committed to helping more children in our community arrive at kindergarten prepared to be successful by funding high-quality early childhood services, collaborating with system partners to maximize resources, and continuing to build awareness across all sectors of the importance of the early years to the success of our children, our communities and our state.

Thanks to our dedicated staff, volunteers and community partners, First Things First has made significant progress toward our vision that all children in Arizona arrive at kindergarten healthy and ready to succeed.

Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Elvira Aspa, Chair



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Executive Summary

Regional Boundaries

The boundaries of the First Things First Colorado River Indian Tribes Region are those of the Arizona part of the Colorado River Indian Reservation, including the town of Parker. The Colorado River Indian Reservation covers about 420 square miles, of which about 84 percent lies in Arizona. The Colorado River Indian Tribes includes four distinct tribes —the Mohave, Chemehuevi, Hopi, and Navajo. When First Things First was established by the passage of Proposition 203 in November 2006, the government-to-government relationship with federally-recognized tribes was acknowledged. Each tribe with tribal lands located in Arizona was given the opportunity to participate within a First Things First designated region or elect to be designated as a separate region. The Colorado River Indian Tribes were among the 10 tribes that chose to be designated as its own region. This decision must be ratified every two years, and since then, the Colorado River Indian River Tribes have opted to continue to be designated as their own region.

Population Characteristics

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the total population of the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region was 7,077, of whom 739 were children ages birth to five years. Over one-fifth (21%) of the 485 households in the region had one or more children ages birth to 5 years. The proportion of households with young children in the region is lower than all Arizona reservations combined (26%) but higher than the state of Arizona (16%). The number of births per year has remained fairly consistent in the region since 2013, with 142 births in calendar year 2017.

A large proportion of young children in the region are Hispanic (50%), particularly compared to all Arizona reservations (9%). Forty-two percent of the children (ages 0-4) in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region are American Indian. This proportion is lower than that in all Arizona reservations combined (92%) but higher than in the state (6%). Similarly, a larger proportion of the adult population (ages 18 and older) in the region identify as Hispanic (36%) than in all Arizona reservations (5%). A notably smaller proportion of the adult population in the region is American Indian (27%) compared to all Arizona reservations (88%). According to the First Things First Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Partnership Council 2018 Needs and Assets Report, much of the difference between the racial and ethnic breakdowns of the Colorado River Indian Tribes compared to all Arizona reservations is due to the inclusion of the town of Parker, part of which is non-tribal land or land leased from the Colorado River Indian Tribes. The proportion of births to mothers who are American Indian in the region (34%) reflects the overall demographics of the area.

One in four children (25%) in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region live in families with at least one foreign-born parent, a proportion that is comparable to that in the state of Arizona (26%) but much higher than in all Arizona reservations combined (3%).

A larger proportion of individuals ages five or older in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region speak only English at home (72%) compared to all Arizona reservations (46%). More than one-fourth (27%) of the population in the region speaks Spanish at home, a higher proportion than that in all Arizona reservations combined (4%) or across the state (21%). The proportion of residents in the region who speak a language other than English or Spanish at home in the region (2%) is lower than in all Arizona reservations combined (50%).ⁱ In addition, eight percent of households in the region are limited English speaking, a proportion that is lower than all Arizona reservations (12%) but twice that of the state (4%).

A higher proportion of young children (ages 0-5) in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region live in households with two parents or step-parents compared to children in all Arizona reservations combined (37% vs 27%). Of the 465 children (ages 0-17) living in a grandparent's household in the region, close to half (48%) live with a grandparent who is responsible for them.

Economic Circumstances

Over half (51%) of young children (ages 0-5) in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region live in poverty. This rate is slightly lower than that of all Arizona reservations combined (54%) but higher than across the state (26%). A similar pattern exists in the poverty rates for the overall population in the region (28%), all Arizona reservations (40%), and the state (17%).

The median income for all families in the region is \$41,120, slightly lower than in La Paz County (\$44,536) and much lower than the state of Arizona (\$63,812). Married-couple families with children (ages 0-17) have a median income that is more than two and a half times the income in single female-headed families (\$49,115 and \$18,611, respectively).

Eligibility for some public assistance programs is determined by different poverty thresholds. For example, family income at or below 141 percent of the federal poverty threshold is one criterion for eligibility for the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS)ⁱⁱ for

ⁱ Please note that the most recent estimates from the American Communities Surveys (ACS) no longer specify what those other languages are. Based on ACS data included in previous Needs and Assets Reports for the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region, it is likely that the other languages spoken at home in the region are Native North American languages. See <https://files.firstthingsfirst.org/regions/Publications/Regional%20Needs%20and%20Assets%20Report%20-%202018%20-%20Colorado%20River%20Indian%20Tribes.pdf>

ⁱⁱ AHCCCS is Arizona's Medicaid agency

children ages 1 to 5, and at or below 147 percent of the federal poverty threshold for children under 1 year old. In the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region, the percentage of families with young children who may qualify for AHCCCS (those under 130% of FPL and between 130% and 149% of FPL) (61%) is higher than in the state (38%) but lower than in all Arizona reservations combined (67%).

From 2015 to 2018, the number of young children receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) decreased from 70 to 40, with five percent of young children participating in TANF in 2018. A similar decline in participation in TANF happened for families in the region during this time period. The number of young children participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) increased slightly in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region between 2015 and 2018, while the number of families participating in SNAP in the region declined slightly over the same time period. The proportion of young children (78%) and families (70%) in the region participating in SNAP in 2018 was higher than in Arizona overall (42% and 39%, respectively). Between the 2015-2016 and 2018-2019 school years, around three-quarters of students in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region qualified for free or reduced-price lunches.

Eighty-one percent of young children in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region live in families with at least one parent in the labor force, compared to 67 percent in all Arizona reservations combined, and 89 percent in the state. The proportion of children in the region who live with only one parent and such parent is not in the labor force is lower in the region compared to all Arizona reservations (20% and 31%, respectively).

The average unemployment rate in the region for the 2013-2017 period was 10 percent, about half of the rate in all Arizona reservations combined (21%).

Twenty-one percent of households in the region spend 30 percent or more of their income on housing-related costs. This proportion is higher than in all Arizona reservations (16%), but lower than the state (31%).

Forty-one percent of households in the region have both a smartphone and computer, which is higher than all Arizona reservations (30%) but lower than the state of Arizona (67%). One in three households (32%) in the region do not have a smartphone or computer, a higher proportion than in Arizona overall (12%). In addition, a higher proportion of residents in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region live in households with a computer and internet connectivity compared to all Arizona reservations (63% vs 38%). Both percentages, however, are much lower than across the state as a whole (82%). A similar pattern is present in the percentage of children (ages 0-17) living in households with a computer and internet connectivity in the region (63%), all Arizona reservations (41%), and the state (83%). Of people

living in households with a computer and internet access in the region, 19 percent rely solely on a cellular data plan, nearly twice the proportion in the state (10%), but lower than that in all Arizona reservations combined (25%).

Educational Indicators

Children in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region attend three public elementary schools in the Parker Unified School District: Blake Primary School, Wallace Elementary School, and Le Pera Elementary School. Blake Primary School serves students in preschool through second grade, Wallace Elementary school serves students in third through fifth grade, and Le Pera Elementary School serves students in kindergarten through eighth grade. In the 2018-19 school year, there were a total of 594 children enrolled in preschool through third grade at schools in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region.

From school year 2015-2016 to school year 2018-2019, chronic absence rates in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region were similar to rates in La Paz County but notably higher than state chronic absence rates. In 2018-2019, the combined chronic absence rate for children in grades K-3 was 22 percent in the region, similar to La Paz County (21%) but almost twice that in Arizona (12%). In the period of school year 2015-2016 to school year 2018-2019, chronic absence rates varied by age in the region, with the highest rates of chronic absences among kindergarteners (30%) and lowest among 1st graders (17%).

In the 2017-2018 school year, 123 third-grade students in the region completed the English Language Arts (ELA) portion of the required Arizona's Measurement of Educational Readiness to Inform Teaching (AzMERIT) test. Thirty-four percent of the students attained a passing grade in the ELA test, which is slightly higher than the La Paz County passing rate (31%) but lower than the state rate of 44 percent. AzMERIT 3rd grade ELA passing rates in the region have increased steadily over time, from 17 percent in 2015-2016 to 34 percent in 2017-2018. In the 2017-2018 school year, 125 third-grade students in the region completed the required math portion of the AzMERIT test, with 52 percent obtaining a passing grade, similar to the rate statewide (53%) and exceeding that in the county (43%). AzMERIT 3rd grade math passing rates also increased over time in the region, from 33 percent in 2015-2016 to 52 percent in 2017-2018.

Youth in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region attend Parker High School and Parker Alternative School. In 2017, the combined four-year graduation rate for these two schools was 81 percent, slightly higher than the state rate (78%). The combined dropout rate for schools in the region was four percent, similar to the state dropout rate of five percent. The four-year high school graduation rates for the region remained stable from 2015 (79%) to 2017 (81%) and were similar to statewide four-year high school graduation rates. Dropout rates also remained steady over time and mirrored state rates, with a four percent dropout rate in the region during the 2017-2018 school year compared to five percent statewide.

The educational attainment among adults (25 and older) in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region closely mirrors that in all Arizona reservations combined. Thirty-seven percent of adults in the region have more than a high school education compared to 38 percent in all Arizona reservations. Both proportions, however, are lower than that across the state (62%). Of the 142 births in the region in 2017, 32 percent were to mothers who had more than a high-school education, similar to La Paz County (31%), but much lower than the state proportion (56%).

Early Learning

During the period covered by this report, early care and education opportunities in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region have included the tribally-operated Colorado River Indian Tribes Head Start, Blake Primary School's preschool, the Sonshine Center and the Early Learning Academy (ELA). In July 2019, the Sonshine Center closed. The Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Partnership Council collaborated with the Colorado River Indian Tribes to help support the establishment of a new child care center in Parker. The new center, the Early Learning Academy (ELA) opened in April 2020. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, ELA established itself as an Arizona Enrichment Center to provide childcare to families of first responders, healthcare workers and other essential service providers.

After accounting for the loss of slots due to the closure of the Sonshine Center and once ELA is under full operation, these early care and education programs will have a combined capacity to serve 278-283 children. Most slots in the region are for children 3-5 years old. All of the Colorado River Indian Tribes Head Start and Blake Primary preschool slots are for children in this age range. Formal child care and early education services for children under the age of three are extremely limited in the region. Only one child care provider, the Early Learning Academy, can serve children in the 0-2 age range.

Recent estimates from the American Community Survey show that early childhood education enrollment rates for preschool-aged children in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region are high. Fifty-three percent of children ages three to four are enrolled in school (i.e. nursery school, preschool, or kindergarten) compared to 41 percent in all Arizona reservations, and 38 percent statewide.

The First Things First Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Partnership Council 2018 Needs and Assets Report indicates that participation in the CRIT Head Start program is cost-free for all children enrolled. Similarly, children with special needs enrolled in the preschool program at Blake Primary school receive services at no cost to their families. Typically-developing children enrolled in the program do pay a fee of \$10 per day. Estimates from the American Community Survey show that child care costs were relatively higher in the Colorado River Tribes Indian Region than in the state overall in 2018. At median levels, sending an infant to a licensed center

in the region requires almost one-fifth (19%) of a family's income, compared to 16 percent statewide.

Subsidies from the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES) can alleviate some of the burden of child care cost for families. The number of children in the region (not involved with the Department of Child Safety or DCS) receiving DES child care subsidies decreased from 27 in 2015 to 11 in 2018. For children involved with the state's child welfare system through DCS, 85 percent of eligible children in the region received DES child care subsidies in 2015, however, fewer than 10 DCS-involved children in the region received DES child care subsidies in 2016, 2017, and 2018. The proportion of eligible families not using DES child care subsidies in the region increased over time. In 2018, 33 percent of eligible families in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region did not use their child care subsidies, compared to 20 percent in 2015.

In 2019, a total of 207 children were enrolled at a Quality First provider site in the region. Of all children enrolled at a Quality First provider site, 88 percent were enrolled at a quality-level setting (public 3-5 stars) and in 2019, 28 children received Quality First scholarships. In 2019, two child care providers in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region participated in Quality First, one of which was a quality-level setting (public 3-5 stars).

The Department of Economic Security (DES) defines early care and education "quality environments" as providers that are accredited by a national organization or providers that have received a state-approved quality indicator that is recognized by the department.ⁱⁱⁱ In 2017, fewer than ten children receiving DES child care subsidies in the region were served in quality environment settings, as defined by DES.

From the 2015-2016 school year to the 2018-2019 school year, the number of children (ages 3-5) enrolled in special education in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region increased from 33 to 46. Of the 46 children in the region enrolled in special education in school year 2018-2019, two-thirds (65%) were diagnosed with a developmental delay. Since the 2015-2016 school year, the percent of students (grade 1-3) enrolled in special education increased slightly at the regional and state level. During the 2018-2019 school year, 21 percent of students in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region were enrolled in special education, a proportion nearly twice as that in the state (12%). In Fiscal Years 2016 and 2017, between three and 29 children (ages 0-2) in the region were referred to the Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP) and were found eligible for services. Between 2017 and 2018, active AzEIP cases increased in the region by 11 percent, from 18 to 20. Fewer than ten children (ages 0-2) from region were served by the Division of

ⁱⁱⁱ Providers are considered quality educational environments by the Arizona Department of Economic Security if they receive a Quality First three-star rating or higher or are accredited by a national organization, such as the Association for Early Learning Leaders or the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

Developmental Disabilities (DDD) each year from Fiscal Year 2015 to Fiscal Year 2018. Between Fiscal Year 2015 and Fiscal Year 2018, no children in the age range of three to five years old received DDD services in the region.

Child Health

In the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region, 17 percent of residents (all ages) lack health insurance coverage, a percent that is lower than in all Arizona reservations (22%) but higher than the state of Arizona (12%). The proportion of young children (ages 0-5) who are uninsured is lower in the region (5%) than in all Arizona reservations (16%) and the state (7%). It is important to note that the U.S. Census Bureau does not consider coverage by the Indian Health Service (IHS) to be insurance coverage. In 2017, the most recent year for which data are available, AHCCCS (Arizona's Medicaid program) paid for 67 percent of the 142 births in the region, while IHS paid for 13 percent.

In 2017, 18.3 percent of the 142 births in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region were to mothers who received no prenatal care in the first trimester, a percentage that meets the Healthy People 2020 target of no more than 22.1 percent. In contrast, both La Paz County (25.8%) and the state (26.4%) did not meet the Healthy People 2020 target. The Colorado River Indian Tribes Region also met the Healthy People 2020 targets for low birth-weight and preterm birth in 2017. However, the percentage of births to mothers using tobacco (7.7%) in the region was higher than the state (4.7%) and much higher than the Healthy People 2020 target of less than 1.4 percent.

Across all required immunizations, with the exception of Hepatitis A, children in child care in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region had high immunization rates and met the Healthy People 2020 targets during the 2017-2018 school year. In school year 2018-2019, vaccination rates among kindergarteners in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region were high, with all Healthy People 2020 targets met. Immunization exemptions among children in child care and kindergarteners in the region were notably lower than the state overall, however exemptions increased slightly over time since the 2016-2017 school year.

In the period from 2015 to 2018, there were fewer than six non-fatal inpatient hospitalizations of young children for unintentional injuries in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region. From 2015 to 2017, there were fewer than six inpatient hospitalizations and 19 emergency room visits for asthma among young children in the region. From 2015 to 2018, there were 228 non-fatal emergency room visits for unintentional injuries for young children in the region. Reasons for these non-fatal emergency room visits were similar across the region, county, and state, with falls (46%) and being 'struck by or against' an object or person (15%) the most common.

There were fewer than six child deaths in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region between 2015 and 2017.

Family Support and Literacy

According to the First Things First Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Partnership Council 2018 Needs and Assets Report, one of the needs in the region is raising awareness for parents around developmental milestones so they can better identify possible delays and get the necessary care for their children on time. The Colorado River Indian Tribes Region 2018 Needs and Assets Report also points out that there is a need in the region for increasing parents' knowledge of the importance of early childhood education and for finding ways to reach out to a large audience about this topic. More multi-generation community events with a strong cultural component could help foster a positive environment conducive to healthy family living.

Child Welfare services in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region are provided by the Colorado River Indian Tribes Department of Health and Social Services. The First Things First Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Partnership Council 2018 Needs and Assets Report indicates that for Fiscal Year 2012-2013 there were 141 referrals for child abuse and neglect received by Colorado River Indian Tribes Child Protective Services. Of those, 33 (or 23%) were for child abuse, 109 (or 77%) were for neglect, and 14 (or 10%) were for sexual abuse. After investigations were conducted on these referrals, a total of 97 (or 69%) were determined to be substantiated. In April of 2014 there were 158 child welfare cases (ages birth to 17), of which 104 (66%) were cases where the children had been placed with relatives and 14 (9%) were Indian Child Welfare Act cases. During the same month, there were 30 children (birth to 17) placed in foster care. In August of 2014 there were six tribally licensed foster homes available in the region with a combined capacity of 16 beds.

Systems Coordination among Early Childhood Programs and Services

In the Colorado River Indian Tribes (CRIT) Region, collaboration with the Colorado River Indian Tribes Tribal Council has been essential in establishing a new childcare center in the community of Parker and the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region. This collaboration is supporting the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region and town of Parker not only to re-establish a child care center, but also to provide access to quality early care and education through participation in Quality First, which will support families and help young children achieve academic and life-skills success.

Additionally, First Things First is facilitating cross-regional service provider meetings in a countywide effort between providers serving families in La Paz County and throughout the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region. The purpose of the service provider meetings is to improve service coordination between La Paz County and the tribal community.

Communication, Public Information and Awareness

First Things First regularly measures their progress toward building support for children birth to 5 through statewide surveys targeting both the general population and parents of young children. Their most recent statewide survey conducted in September 2018 found that, compared to previous surveys in 2012 and 2016, there was increased agreement in the general public and parents of young children with key First Things First messaging. While the survey also showed that awareness of First Things First has increased over time, there are still large portions of the general public (87%) and parents of young children (66%) who have never heard of First Things First.

First Things First has also led a concerted effort to build awareness among policymakers at all levels (federal, tribal, state, and municipal) of the importance of early childhood. In SFY19, FTF also launched ACT4KIDS, a text-based system that alerts participants to timely developments in early childhood policy and opportunities to engage with policymakers. In its first nine months of implementation, more than 700 Arizonans had signed up to participate in ACT4KIDS. In addition, FTF actively participates in the Arizona Early Childhood Alliance, comprised of more than 50 early childhood system leaders, which represents a united voice of the early childhood community in advocating for early childhood programs and services.

The Colorado River Indian Tribes Region

Regional Boundaries

The First Things First regional boundaries were established to create regions that (a) reflect the view of families in terms of where they access services, (b) coincide with existing boundaries or service areas of organizations providing early childhood services, (c) maximize the ability to collaborate with service systems and local governments, (d) facilitate the ability to convene a Regional Partnership Council, and (e) allow for the collection of demographic and indicator data.

The boundaries of the First Things First Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Partnership Council are those of the Arizona part of the Colorado River Indian Tribes Reservation, including the town of Parker. When First Things First was established by the passage of Proposition 203 in November 2006, the government-to-government relationship with federally-recognized tribes was acknowledged. Each tribe with tribal lands located in Arizona was given the opportunity to participate within a First Things First designated region or elect to be designated as a separate region. The Colorado River Indian Tribes were among the 10 tribes that chose to be designated as its own region. This decision must be ratified every two years, and since then, the Colorado River Indian River Tribes have opted to continue to be designated as their own region.

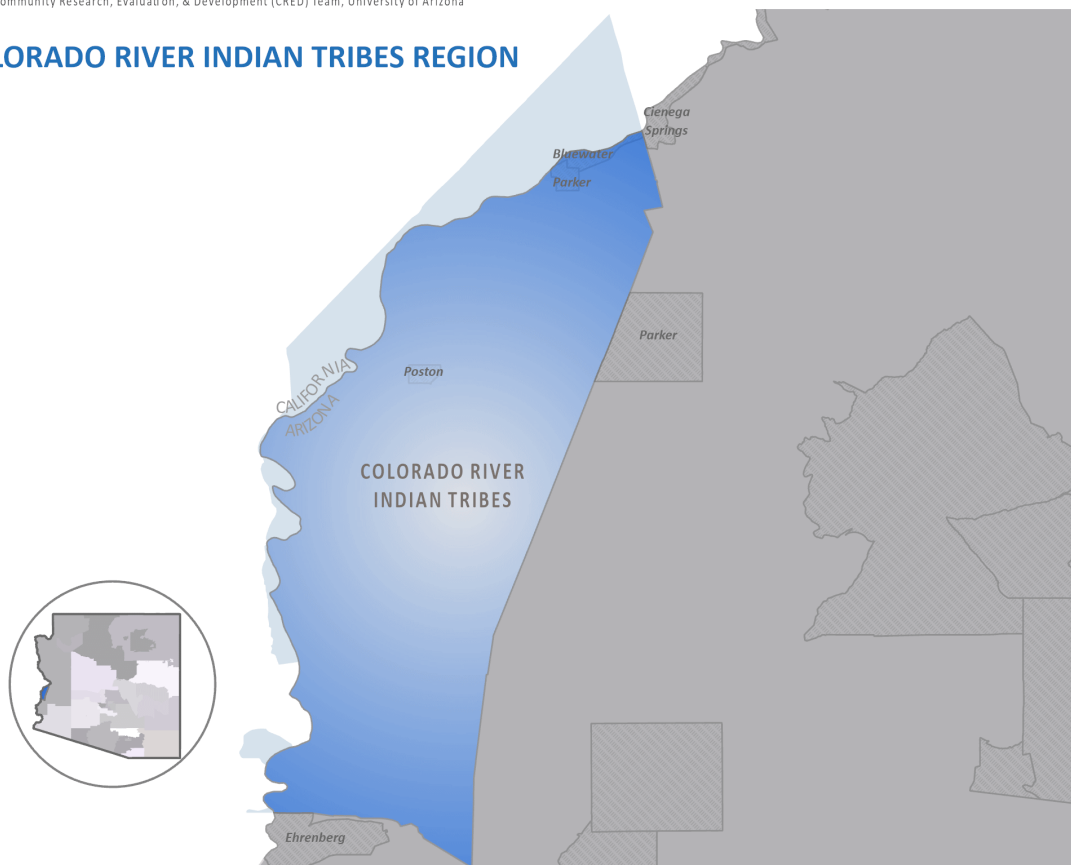
The Colorado River Indian Tribes Reservation covers about 420 square miles, of which about 84 percent lies in Arizona and it includes four distinct Tribes—the Mohave, Chemehuevi, Hopi and Navajo. The Colorado River Indian Tribes (CRIT) Region encompasses a unique and diverse area. The primary community in the First Things First Colorado River Indian Tribes Region is Parker and Poston Arizona, which are located on a combination of Tribal land, leased land that is owned by CRIT and land owned by non-tribal members. Therefore, the First Things First CRIT Region serves both tribal members and non-members on the Arizona portions of the Colorado River Indian Reservation and in the Town of Parker. There are programs managed by the Colorado River Indian Tribes, such as the Special Supplemental Program for Women, Infants and Children’s program (WIC), Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the CRIT Library and Joint Venture Sewer Project that serve the entire population of La Paz County.

Figure 1 shows the geographical area covered by the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region. Additional information available at the end of this report includes a map of the region by zip code in Appendix 1, a table listing zip codes for the region in Appendix 2, and a map of school districts in the region in Appendix 3.

Figure 1. The First Things First Colorado River Indian Tribes Region

Map by Community Research, Evaluation, & Development (CRED) Team, University of Arizona

COLORADO RIVER INDIAN TRIBES REGION



Custom map by the Community Research, Evaluation, & Development (CRED) Team using shapefiles obtained from First Things First and the U.S. Census Bureau 2019 TIGER/Line Shapefiles (<https://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/geo/shapefiles/index.php>).

Data Sources

The data contained in this report come from a variety of sources. Some data were provided to First Things First by state agencies, such as the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES), the Arizona Department of Education (ADE), and the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS). Other data were obtained from publicly available sources, including the 2010 U.S. Census, the American Community Survey (ACS), and the Arizona Department of Administration (ADOA). Where more recent data are not available, this report cites data from the 2018 First Things First Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Partnership Council Needs and Assets Report.

The U.S. Census¹ is an enumeration of the population of the United States. It is conducted every ten years, and includes information about housing, race, and ethnicity. The 2010 U.S. Census data are available by census block. There are about 115,000 inhabited blocks in Arizona, with an

average population of 56 people each. Census data presented in the report is drawn from the Census Geography for the Colorado River Indian Region.

The American Community Survey² is a survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau each month by mail, telephone, and face-to-face interviews. It covers many different topics, including income, language, education, employment, and housing. The ACS data are available by census tract. Arizona is divided into about 1,500 census tracts, with an average of about 4,200 people in each. The ACS data are available for the Colorado River Indian Reservation Census Geography. The most recent and most reliable ACS data are averaged over the past five years; those are the data included in this report. They are based on surveys conducted from 2013 to 2017. In general, the reliability of ACS estimates is greater for more populated areas. Statewide estimates, for example, are more reliable than county-level estimates or estimates for small tribal communities.

These data sources are important for the unique information they are able to provide about children and families across the United States, but both of them have acknowledged limitations for their use on tribal lands. Although the Census Bureau asserted that the 2010 Census count was quite accurate in general, they estimate that “American Indians and Alaska Natives living on reservations were undercounted by 4.9 percent.”³ According to the State of Indian Country Arizona report⁴ there are particular challenges in using and interpreting ACS data from tribal communities and American Indians in general. There is no major outreach effort to familiarize the population with the survey (as is the case with the decennial census). Most important, the small sample size of the ACS makes it more likely that the survey may not accurately represent the characteristics of the population on a reservation. The State of Indian Country Arizona report indicates that at the National level, in 2010 the ACS failed to account for 14% of the American Indian/Alaska Native (alone, not in combination with other races) population that was actually counted in the 2010 decennial census. In Arizona the undercount was smaller (4%), but according to the State of Indian Country Arizona report, ACS may be particularly unreliable for the smaller reservations in the state.

While recognizing that estimates provided by ACS data may not be fully reliable, this report includes these estimates because they still are the most comprehensive publicly-available data that can help begin to describe the families that First Things First serve.

To protect the confidentiality of program participants, the First Things First Data Dissemination and Suppression Guidelines preclude our reporting social service and early education programming data if the count is less than ten and preclude our reporting data related to health or developmental delay if the count is less than six. In addition, some data received from state agencies may be suppressed according to their own guidelines. The Arizona Department of Health Services does not report counts less than six; the Arizona Department of Economic Security does not report counts between one and nine; and the Arizona Department of

Education does not report counts less than eleven. Throughout this report, information which is not available because of suppression guidelines will be indicated by entries of “<6” or “<10” or “<11” for counts, or “DS” (data suppressed) for percentages. Data are sometimes not available for particular regions, either because a particular program did not operate in the region or because data are only available at the county level. Cases where data are not available will be indicated by an entry of “N/A.”

For some data, an exact number was not available because it was the sum of several numbers provided by a state agency, and some numbers were suppressed in accordance with agency guidelines. In these cases, a range of possible numbers is provided, where the true number lies within that range. For example, for data from the sum of a suppressed number of children ages 0-12 months, 13 children ages 13-24 months, and 12 children ages 25-35 months, the entry in the table would read “26 to 34.” This is because the suppressed number of children ages 0-12 months is between one and nine, so the possible range of values is the sum of the two known numbers plus one to the sum of the two known numbers plus nine. Ranges that include numbers below the suppression threshold of less than six or ten may still be included if the upper limit of the range is above six or ten. Since a range is provided rather than an exact number, the confidentiality of program participants is preserved.

In most of the tables in this report, the top row of data corresponds to the First Things First Colorado River Indian Tribes Region. When available, the next row presents the data for the Colorado River Indian Tribes as a whole, including the portion of the reservation that extends into California. The next rows show data that are useful for comparison purposes: the all Arizona reservations combined, and the state of Arizona. Please note that data are not always available for all of these geographies. Data labelled “All Arizona Reservations” come from either the 2010 U.S. Census or the 2013-2017 American Community Survey. These numbers are the totals for all residents of the 21 American Indian Areas within the state of Arizona. We include only the Arizona parts of the five reservations (Colorado River Indian Tribes, Fort Mojave, Fort Yuma, Navajo Nation, and Zuni) which have land in neighboring states.

Population Characteristics

Why it Matters

To support the healthy development and learning of young children across Arizona, advocates and decision makers need to understand who those children and their families are.⁵ Although parents are a child’s first and most important teachers, families of young children often use community resources to help them promote positive outcomes for their children.⁶ The number and characteristics of young children and families in a region can inform the range of services in a community, helping to guide where to locate child care, health care, and social services so that they are accessible to those who need them.^{7,8} Tribal communities are often located in rural locations and often experience different economic conditions within the state such as access to jobs, food resources, schools, health care facilities and providers, and social services. These disparities have been associated with a number of poor outcomes for children including infant mortality and obesity, among others.⁹

Immigrant families. Families in the US are becoming more diverse. Knowing how local communities are changing can help ensure families have access to the services and supports they need to thrive.¹⁰ Children of foreign-born parents represent one of the fastest growing groups of young children in the country.¹¹ Recent changes in national immigration policy have led some immigrant families to avoid using social services for which they legally qualify due to fear of deportation or jeopardizing their legal status in the country.^{12,13,14} Policy changes at a national level, such as the “public charge rule”^{iv} set to be enacted in October 2019, may deter families—particularly those with a recent history of immigration—from using available supports for which they legally qualify.^{15,16} Children in these families may be at particular risk of reduced access to medical care and increased food insecurity.^{17,18,19}

Language use. Households with multiple languages spoken pose a unique balance of benefits for child learning and barriers to parental engagement, which counties with high rates of other languages spoken should specifically consider. Acknowledging and valuing linguistic heritage (such as through language preservation efforts) and recognizing needs for resources and services in languages other than English should remain important considerations for organizations and agencies across Arizona.^{20,21,22,23} Awareness of the levels of English proficiency and of other home languages spoken within a region provides information about a community’s assets and allows for identifying relevant supports. Young children can benefit

^{iv} U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services defines “public charge” as an individual who is likely to become “primarily dependent on the government for subsistence, as demonstrated by either the receipt of public cash assistance for income maintenance, or institutionalization for long-term care at government expense.”

from exposure to multiple languages; mastery of more than one language is an asset in school readiness and academic achievement, and offers cognitive and social-emotional benefits in early school and throughout their lifetime.^{24,25,26,27} Although dual language learning is an asset, limited English speaking households (that is, households where none of the adult members speak English well) can face challenges. These families may experience barriers to accessing health care and social service information, as well as barriers to engaging in important parent-teacher interactions, all of which can impede their child’s health and development.^{28,29}

Providing information about resources and services in languages accessible to families in the region can help remove those barriers. Although Spanish is the most common second language spoken, Arizona is also home to a large number of Native communities, with Native languages spoken by families in those communities. Language preservation and revitalization are critical to strengthening culture in Native communities, addressing issues of educational equity, and to the promotion of social unity, community well-being, and Indigenous self-determination.^{30, 31} Special consideration should be given to respecting and supporting the numerous Native American languages spoken, particularly in tribal communities around the state.

Family and household composition. In addition to growing racial, ethnic and social diversity, U.S. and Arizona families are becoming more diverse in terms of family structure.^{32,33,34,35} Understanding the makeup of families in a region can help better prepare child care, school and agency staff to engage with families in ways that support positive interactions both within families and with staff to enhance each child’s early learning and development.³⁶

Multi-generational households, particularly those where grandparents live in the home with the child and parents, are common in some communities and cultures and can provide financial and social benefits.³⁷ The proportion of young children living in a grandparent’s household in all Arizona reservations combined (40%) is more than double that of the state rate (14%).³⁸ It is important to note that these households may be multigenerational—i.e., the grandparent and the child’s parent may live in the same household.^v However, parents are not always in the picture in these homes. Care of children by someone other than their parents, such as relatives or close friends, is known as kinship care and is increasingly common.³⁹ Children living in kinship care can also arrive in those situations for a variety of reasons, including a parent’s absence for work or military service, chronic illness, drug abuse, or incarceration, or due to abuse, neglect, or homelessness. Understanding who is caring for children can help in identifying and creating

^v Note that there is difference between families/sub-families and householders in Census data. For example, a child living with their single mother in their grandparent’s married household would be counted as living with a single parent in the living arrangements but as living in a married couple household in the composition of households table. That is, the living arrangements figure looks at the presence of a child’s parents within the household (whether or not the parent is the householder).

specific supports for these families. Children in kinship care often face special needs as a result of trauma, and therefore these families often require additional support and assistance to help children adjust and provide the best possible home environment.⁴⁰ A child’s risk of living in poverty is also higher for those living with grandparents, adding to the family stress.⁴¹ These families are likely to require access to information on resources, support services, benefits, and policies available to aid in their caregiving role.⁴² Though it varies from one Native community to another, extended, multigenerational families, and kinship care are common in Native communities.^{43,44} The strengths associated with this family structure—mutual help and respect—can provide members of these families with a network of support which can be very valuable when dealing with socio-economic hardships.⁴⁵ Grandparents are often central to these multigenerational households, in many cases sharing and strengthening Native language, history, and culture.^{46, 47}

What the Data Tell Us

Population, Race, and Ethnicity

- According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the total population of the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region was 7,077, of whom 739 were children ages birth to five years. Over one-fifth (21%) of the 485 households in the region had one or more children ages birth to 5 years. The proportion of households with young children in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region is lower than all Arizona reservations combined (26%) but higher than the state of Arizona (16%) (Table 1).
- The number of births per year in the region has remained fairly consistent since 2013, with 142 births in calendar year 2017 (Figure 2).
- A large proportion of young children in the region are Hispanic (50%), particularly compared to all Arizona reservations (9%). Forty-two percent of the children (ages 0-4) in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region are American Indian. This proportion is lower than that in all Arizona reservations combined (92%) but higher than in the state (6%) (Table 3).
- Similarly, a larger proportion of the adult population (ages 18 and older) in the region identify as Hispanic (36%) than in all Arizona reservations (5%). A notably smaller proportion of the adult population in the region is American Indian (27%) compared to all Arizona reservations (88%) (Table 4).
- According to the First Things First Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Partnership Council 2018 Needs and Assets Report, much of the difference between the racial and ethnic breakdowns of the Colorado River Indian Tribes compared to all Arizona reservations is due to the inclusion of the town of Parker, part of which is non-tribal land or land leased from the Colorado River Indian Tribes.⁴⁸
- The proportion of births to mothers who are American Indian in the region (34%) reflects the overall demographics of the area (Table 5).

Immigrant Families and Language Use

- One in four children (25%) in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region live in families with at least one foreign-born parent, a proportion that is comparable to that in the state of Arizona (26%) but much higher than in all Arizona reservations combined (3%) (Table 6).
- A larger proportion of individuals ages five or older in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region speak only English at home (72%) compared to all Arizona reservations (46%) (Table 8).
- More than one-fourth (27%) of the population in the region speaks Spanish at home. This proportion is substantially higher than that in all Arizona reservations combined (4%) as well as the state (21%). The proportion of residents in the region who speak a language other than English or Spanish at home in the region (2%) is notably lower than in all Arizona reservations combined (50%).^{vi}
- Eight percent of households in the region are limited English speaking, a proportion that is lower than all Arizona reservations (12%) but twice that of the state (4%) (Table 7 & Table 9).

Family and Household Composition

- A higher proportion of young children (ages 0-5) in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region live in households with two parents or step-parents compared to children in all Arizona reservations combined (37% vs 27%) (Table 10).
- Of the 465 children (ages 0-17) living in a grandparent's household in the region, close to half (48%) live with a grandparent who is responsible for them (Table 13).

^{vi} Please note that the most recent estimates from the American Communities Surveys (ACS) no longer specify what those other languages are. Based on ACS data included in previous Needs and Assets Reports for the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region, it is likely that the other languages spoken at home in the region are Native North American languages. See

<https://files.firstthingsfirst.org/regions/Publications/Regional%20Needs%20and%20Assets%20Report%20-%202018%20-%20Colorado%20River%20Indian%20Tribes.pdf>

Population, Race, and Ethnicity

Table 1. Population and households, 2010

GEOGRAPHY	TOTAL POPULATION	POPULATION (AGES 0-5)	TOTAL NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS	HOUSEHOLDS WITH ONE OR MORE CHILDREN (AGES 0-5)	PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH ONE OR MORE CHILDREN (AGES 0-5)
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	7,077	739	2,336	485	21%
Colorado River Indian Tribes (entire)	8,764	792	3,207	526	16%
All Arizona Reservations	178,131	20,511	50,140	13,115	26%
La Paz County	20,489	1,227	9,198	822	9%
Arizona	6,392,017	546,609	2,380,990	384,441	16%
United States	308,745,538	24,258,220	116,716,292	17,613,638	15%

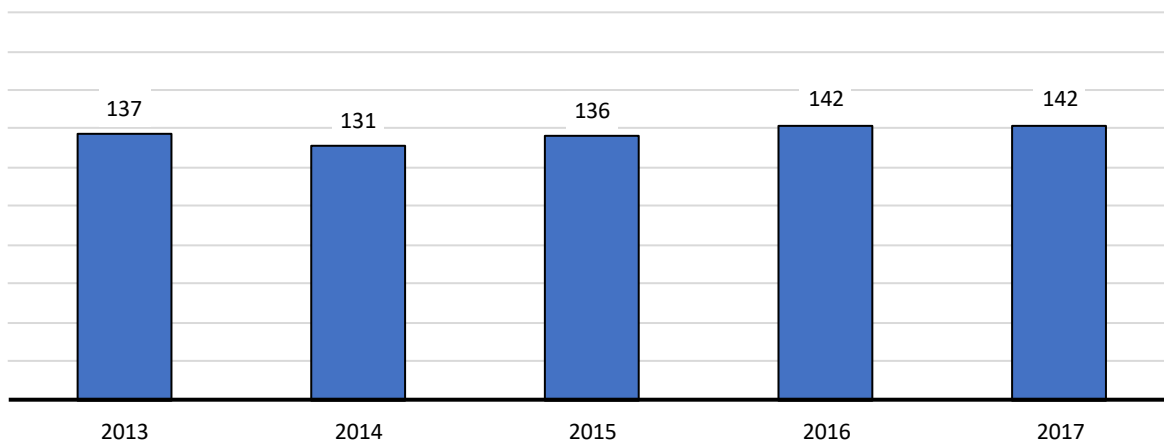
Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2010). 2010 Decennial Census, Summary File 1, Tables P1, P4, & P20

Table 2. Population of children by single year of age, 2010

GEOGRAPHY	POPULATION (AGES 0-5)	AGE 0	AGE 1	AGE 2	AGE 3	AGE 4	AGE 5
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	739	106	116	125	144	125	123
Colorado River Indian Tribes (entire)	792	110	125	133	156	131	137
All Arizona Reservations	20,511	3,390	3,347	3,443	3,451	3,430	3,450
La Paz County	1,227	178	199	203	244	204	199
Arizona	546,609	87,557	89,746	93,216	93,880	91,316	90,894
United States	24,258,220	3,944,153	3,978,070	4,096,929	4,119,040	4,063,170	4,056,858

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2010). 2010 Decennial Census, Summary File 1, Table P14

Figure 2. Number of births per calendar year in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region, 2013 to 2017



Source: ADHS Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. (2019). Arizona Health Status and Vital Statistics.

Table 3. Race and ethnicity of the population of young children (ages 0-4), 2010

GEOGRAPHY	POPULATION (AGES 0-4)	HISPANIC	WHITE, NOT HISPANIC	BLACK OR AFRICAN-AMERICAN	AMERICAN INDIAN	ASIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	616	50%	12%	1%	42%	<1%
Colorado River Indian Tribes (entire)	655	49%	15%	1%	40%	<1%
All Arizona Reservations	17,061	9%	1%	<1%	92%	<1%
La Paz County	1,028	50%	24%	1%	27%	<1%
Arizona	455,715	45%	40%	5%	6%	3%
United States	20,201,362	25%	51%	14%	1%	5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2010). 2010 Decennial Census, Summary File 1, Tables P12B-H

Table 4. Race and ethnicity of the adult population (ages 18 and older), 2010

GEOGRAPHY	POPULATION 18 YEARS AND OVER	HISPANIC	WHITE, NOT HISPANIC	BLACK OR AFRICAN- AMERICAN, NOT HISPANIC	AMERICAN INDIAN, NOT HISPANIC	ASIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER, NOT HISPANIC	OTHER, NOT HISPANIC
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	4,961	36%	33%	1%	27%	1%	2%
Colorado River Indian Tribes (entire)	6,437	30%	45%	1%	21%	1%	2%
All Arizona Reservations	117,049	5%	5%	<1%	88%	<1%	1%
La Paz County	16,811	18%	70%	1%	9%	<1%	2%
Arizona	4,763,003	25%	63%	4%	4%	3%	1%
United States	234,564,071	14%	67%	12%	1%	5%	1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2010). 2010 Decennial Census, Summary File 1, Table P11

Table 5. Race and ethnicity of mothers giving birth in calendar year 2017

GEOGRAPHY	TOTAL NUMBER OF BIRTHS IN 2017	MOTHER WAS HISPANIC OR LATINA	MOTHER WAS WHITE, NOT HISPANIC	MOTHER WAS BLACK OR AFRICAN- AMERICAN	MOTHER WAS AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKAN	MOTHER WAS ASIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	142	25%	40%	DS	34%	DS
La Paz County	194	26%	47%	DS	26%	DS
Arizona	81,664	41%	44%	6%	6%	4%

Source: ADHS Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. (2019). Arizona Health Status and Vital Statistics.

Immigrant Families and Language Use

Table 6. Children (ages 0-5) living with parents who are foreign-born

GEOGRAPHY	YOUNG CHILDREN (AGES 0-5) LIVING IN FAMILIES OR SUBFAMILIES	YOUNG CHILDREN (AGES 0-5) LIVING IN FAMILIES OR SUBFAMILIES WITH ONE OR TWO FOREIGN-BORN PARENTS	PERCENT OF YOUNG CHILDREN (AGES 0-5) LIVING IN FAMILIES OR SUBFAMILIES WITH ONE OR TWO FOREIGN-BORN PARENTS
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	679	173	25%
Colorado River Indian Tribes (entire)	740	173	23%
All Arizona Reservations	16,902	457	3%
La Paz County	891	292	33%
Arizona	498,102	130,705	26%
United States	22,939,897	5,730,869	25%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018). American Community Survey five-year estimates 2013-2017, Table 05009

Note: Children living in subfamilies are children who live together with one or two of their parents in a relative's household (such as a grandparent or aunt or uncle).

Table 7. Language spoken at home by persons ages 5 and older

GEOGRAPHY	POPULATION (AGES 5 AND OLDER)	PERCENT OF THE POPULATION (AGES 5+) WHO SPEAK ONLY ENGLISH AT HOME	PERCENT OF THE POPULATION (AGES 5+) WHO SPEAK SPANISH AT HOME	PERCENT OF THE POPULATION (AGES 5+) WHO SPEAK OTHER LANGUAGES AT HOME
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	7,607	72%	27%	2%
Colorado River Indian Tribes (entire)	8,911	75%	24%	2%
All Arizona Reservations	171,213	46%	4%	50%
La Paz County	19,534	81%	18%	1%
Arizona	6,375,189	73%	21%	6%
United States	301,150,892	79%	13%	8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018). American Community Survey five-year estimates 2013-2017, Table C16001

Note: The most recent estimates from the American Community Survey (ACS) no longer specify the proportion of the population who speak a Native North American language for geographies smaller than the state. Based on ACS data included in previous Needs and Assets Reports for the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region, it is likely that the other languages spoken at home in the region are Native North American languages. See

<https://files.firstthingsfirst.org/regions/Publications/Regional%20Needs%20and%20Assets%20Report%20-%202018%20-%20Colorado%20River%20Indian%20Tribes.pdf>

Table 8. English-language proficiency for persons ages 5 and older

GEOGRAPHY	POPULATION (AGES 5 AND OLDER)	PERCENT OF THE POPULATION (AGES 5+) WHO SPEAK ONLY ENGLISH AT HOME	PERCENT OF THE POPULATION (AGES 5+) WHO SPEAK ANOTHER LANGUAGE AT HOME, AND SPEAK ENGLISH "VERY WELL"	PERCENT OF THE POPULATION (AGES 5+) WHO SPEAK ANOTHER LANGUAGE AT HOME, BUT DO NOT SPEAK ENGLISH "VERY WELL"
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	7,607	72%	17%	11%
Colorado River Indian Tribes (entire)	8,911	75%	15%	10%
All Arizona Reservations	171,213	46%	41%	13%
La Paz County	19,534	81%	12%	7%
Arizona	6,375,189	73%	18%	9%
United States	301,150,892	79%	13%	9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018). American Community Survey five-year estimates 2013-2017, Table B16005

Table 9. Limited-English-speaking households

GEOGRAPHY	TOTAL NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS	NUMBER OF "LIMITED ENGLISH SPEAKING" HOUSEHOLDS	PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS WHICH ARE "LIMITED ENGLISH SPEAKING"
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	2,632	218	8%
Colorado River Indian Tribes (entire)	3,351	224	7%
All Arizona Reservations	49,638	5,955	12%
La Paz County	8,798	376	4%
Arizona	2,482,311	108,133	4%
United States	118,825,921	5,305,440	4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018). American Community Survey five-year estimates 2013-2017, Table 16002

Family and Household Composition

Table 10. Living arrangements for children (ages 0-5)

GEOGRAPHY	CHILDREN (0-5) LIVING WITH TWO PARENTS OR STEPPARENTS	CHILDREN (0-5) LIVING WITH ONE PARENT OR STEPPARENT	CHILDREN (0-5) LIVING WITH RELATIVES (NOT PARENTS)	CHILDREN (0-5) LIVING WITH NON- RELATIVES	
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	767	37%	51%	7%	4%
Colorado River Indian Tribes (entire)	835	36%	53%	7%	4%
All Arizona Reservations	18,635	27%	64%	8%	1%
La Paz County	1,040	38%	48%	8%	6%
Arizona	520,556	59%	37%	2%	2%
United States	23,817,787	62%	34%	2%	2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018). 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Tables B05009, B09001, and B17006

Table 11. Heads of households in which children (ages 0-5) live, 2010

GEOGRAPHY	HOUSEHOLDS WITH ONE OR MORE CHILDREN (AGES 0-5)	MARRIED FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS	SINGLE-MALE HOUSEHOLDS	SINGLE-FEMALE HOUSEHOLDS
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	485	47%	15%	37%
Colorado River Indian Tribes (entire)	526	47%	16%	37%
All Arizona Reservations	13,115	45%	13%	42%
La Paz County	822	53%	15%	33%
Arizona	384,441	65%	11%	24%
United States	17,613,638	67%	9%	24%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2010). 2010 Decennial Census, Summary File 1, Tables P20 & P32

Table 12. Children (ages 0-5) living in the household of a grandparent, 2010

GEOGRAPHY	POPULATION (AGES 0-5)	CHILDREN (0-5) LIVING IN A GRANDPARENT'S HOUSEHOLD	PERCENT OF CHILDREN (0-5) WHO LIVE IN A GRANDPARENT'S HOUSEHOLD
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	739	135	18%
Colorado River Indian Tribes (entire)	792	145	18%
All Arizona Reservations	20,511	8,239	40%
La Paz County	1,227	202	16%
Arizona	546,609	74,153	14%
United States	24,258,220	2,867,165	12%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2010). 2010 Decennial Census, Summary File 1, Table P41

Table 13. Grandparents responsible for grandchildren (ages 0-17) living with them

GEOGRAPHY	GRANDCHILDREN UNDER 18 LIVING WITH GRANDPARENT HOUSEHOLDER	PERCENT OF GRANDCHILDREN UNDER 18 LIVING WITH A GRANDPARENT HOUSEHOLDER WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THEM
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	465	48%
Colorado River Indian Tribes (entire)	534	46%
All Arizona Reservations	18,864	55%
La Paz County	624	53%
Arizona	147,707	51%
United States	5,781,786	49%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018). American Community Survey five-year estimates 2013-2017, Table B10002

Note: This table includes both (a) grandchildren living with grandparents with no parent present and (b) grandchildren who live in multigenerational homes where the grandparent has assumed responsibility for the child, despite the presence of a parent.

Economic Circumstances

Why it Matters

A family's economic stability is a powerful predictor of child well-being and is one of the key social determinants of health.⁴⁹ Factors contributing to economic stability—or lack thereof—include **poverty, food insecurity, employment, and housing instability.**⁵⁰

Economic circumstances in tribal communities can be much more complex than in other parts of the state. For many historical and legal reasons, economic development in tribal areas has followed a different trajectory than in other areas. Economic disparities between non-Native and Native communities have compounded over decades, affecting the poverty, employment, housing instability and food security in tribal areas.⁵¹ At the same time, it is common for tribal governments to be involved in community and economic development, investing in forestry, fisheries, gaming, and many other economic arenas to strengthen the social and economic conditions of their people.⁵²

Poverty. Childhood poverty can negatively affect the way children's bodies grow and develop, including fundamental changes to the architecture of the brain.⁵³ Children raised in poverty are at a greater risk of a host of negative outcomes including low birth weight, lower school achievement, and poor health.^{54,55,56,57,58} They are also more likely to remain poor later in life.^{59,60} As a benchmark, the 2019 Federal Poverty Guideline—the criterion used for establishing eligibility for some safety net programs—for a family of four was \$25,750.⁶¹ However the federal poverty guideline definition of poverty was developed in the 1950s, and estimates only what a family would need to earn to afford basic nutrition, without taking into account other costs of living,⁶² it is widely considered to be well below what a family actually needs to earn to make ends meet.⁶³ The “self-sufficiency standard” attempts to estimate how much families need to earn to fully support themselves, accounting for local costs of housing, transportation, and childcare, and other budget items.⁶⁴ The 2018 self-sufficiency standard for an Arizona family with two adults, one preschooler, and one school-age child was \$56,143—over twice the poverty threshold.⁶⁵

Public assistance programs are one way of counteracting the effects of poverty and providing supports to children and families in need. The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Cash Assistance program provides temporary cash benefits and support services to children and families. Eligibility is based on citizenship or qualified resident status, Arizona residency, and limits on resources and monthly income. In recognition of tribal sovereignty, federally-recognized tribes have the option to administer their own TANF program.

Food insecurity. A limited or uncertain availability of food is negatively associated with many markers of health and well-being for children, including heightened risks for developmental delays,⁶⁶ and overweight and obesity.⁶⁷ The USDA defines food deserts as areas that are low-income and have low access to sources of healthy food, specifically grocery stores and supermarkets.^{vii,68} A large portion of tribal lands in Arizona are in food deserts, adding to food insecurity in tribal communities.⁶⁹ Sixty-five percent of populated tribal lands are considered food deserts, whereas only 17 percent of all populated areas in Arizona meet the definition of a food desert.⁷⁰ To help reduce food insecurity, there are a variety of federally-funded programs including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP),⁷¹ the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC),⁷² the National School Lunch Program,⁷³ the School Breakfast Program,⁷⁴ the Summer Food Service Program,⁷⁵ and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).⁷⁶ However, only about 58 percent of food insecure households nationwide report participating in federally-funded nutrition assistance programs.⁷⁷ Income-eligible American Indians residing on some reservations in Arizona may have access to the federal Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR).⁷⁸ On rural Indian reservations, the FDPIR exists to distribute food to eligible Native residents who do not have access to SNAP offices or SNAP-approved businesses.⁷⁹

SNAP. Administered by the Arizona Department of Economic Security and also referred to as “Nutrition Assistance” and “food stamps,” SNAP has been shown to help reduce hunger and improve access to healthier food.⁸⁰ SNAP benefits support working families whose incomes simply do not provide for all their needs. For low-income working families, the additional funds available to access food from SNAP can help make a meaningful difference. For example, for a three-person family with one person who earns a minimum wage, SNAP benefits can boost take-home income by 10-20 percent.⁸¹

WIC. Administered by the Arizona Department of Health Services, this federally-funded program serves pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding women, as well as infants and young children (under the age of five) who are economically disadvantaged (i.e., family incomes at or below 185 percent of the federal poverty level). The program offers funds for nutritious food, breastfeeding and nutrition education, and referrals to health and social services.⁸²

Participation in WIC has been shown to be associated with healthier births, lower infant mortality, improved nutrition, decreased food insecurity, improved access to health care, and improved cognitive development and academic achievement for children.⁸³

National School Lunch Program. Administered by the Arizona Department of Education, the National School Lunch Program provides free and reduced-price meals at school for students

^{vii} Low access is defined differently for urban (within ½-1 mile) and rural areas (within 10-20 miles).

whose family incomes are at or less than 130 percent of the federal poverty level for free lunch, and 185 percent of the federal poverty level for reduced price lunch.

Employment. Unemployment and underemployment can affect a family’s ability to meet the expenses of daily living, as well as their access to resources needed to support their children’s well-being and healthy development. A parent’s job loss can affect children’s school performance, leading to poorer attendance, lower test scores, and higher risk of grade repetition, suspension, or expulsion.⁸⁴ Unemployment can also put families at greater risk for stress, family conflict, and homelessness.⁸⁵ Note that this does not include persons who have dropped out of the labor force entirely, including those who wanted to but could not find suitable work and thus have stopped looking for employment.⁸⁶ Due to many historical and legal reasons as well as differences in practical economic structures, employment rates in Native communities can vary greatly from state rates.⁸⁷

Housing instability. Examining indicators related to housing quality, costs, and availability can reveal additional factors affecting the health and well-being of young children and their families in a region. Housing challenges such as issues paying rent or mortgage, overcrowded living conditions, unstable housing arrangements, and homelessness can have harmful effects on the physical, social-emotional, and cognitive development of young children.⁸⁸ Traditionally, housing has been deemed affordable for a family if it costs less than 30 percent of their annual income.⁸⁹ High housing costs, relative to family income, are associated with increased risk for overcrowding, frequent moving, poor nutrition, declines in mental health, and homelessness.^{90,91} On tribal lands, even when housing is affordable, housing *availability* is typically lower due to the legal complexities of land ownership and the lack of rental properties. These circumstances often lead to a shortage of safe, quality housing.⁹²

One increasingly critical need for modern homes is a reliable means of internet access. Families often rely on communication and information technologies to access information, connect socially, pursue an education, and apply for employment opportunities. Parents are also more likely to turn to online resources, rather than in-person resources, for information about obtaining health care and sensitive parenting topics including bonding, separation anxiety, and managing parenting challenges.⁹³ The term “digital divide” refers to disparities in communication and information technologies,⁹⁴ and the lack of sustained access to information and communication technologies in low-income communities is associated with economic and social inequality.⁹⁵ Low-income households may experience regular disruptions to this increasingly important service when they cannot pay bills, repair or update equipment, or access public locations that may offer connectivity (e.g., computers at local libraries).⁹⁶ Nationally, Americans are increasingly reliant on smartphones as their sole source of internet access. Particularly for individuals who are younger, lower-income, and non-white, broadband

service at home is less common and smartphone-only internet use is more common.⁹⁷ Households in rural areas typically experience more limited coverage from mobile networks and slower-speed internet services, as well as limited internet provider options which can result in higher monthly costs.^{98,99,100} This is especially true of the more rural Native American communities in the state, where broadband services are sometimes non-existent.^{101, 102}

What the Data Tell Us

Poverty

- Over half (51%) of young children (ages 0-5) in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region live in poverty. This rate is slightly lower than that of all Arizona reservations combined (54%) but substantially higher than the state (26%). A similar pattern exists in the poverty rates for the overall population in the region (28%), all Arizona reservations (40%), and the state (17%) (Figure 3).
- The median income for all families in the region is \$41,120, slightly lower than in La Paz County (\$44,536) and much lower than the state of Arizona (\$63,812). Married-couple families with children (ages 0-17) have a median income that is more than two and a half times the income in single female-headed families (\$49,115 and \$18,611, respectively) (Table 14).
- Eligibility for some public assistance programs is determined by different poverty thresholds. For example, family income at or below 141 percent of the federal poverty threshold is one criterion for eligibility for the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS)^{viii} for children ages 1 to 5, and at or below 147 percent of the federal poverty threshold for children under 1 year old.¹⁰³ In the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region, the percentage of families with young children who may qualify for AHCCCS (those under 130% of FPL and between 130% and 149% of FPL) (61%) is substantially higher than in the state (38%) but lower than in all Arizona reservations combined (67%) (Table 15 and Figure 4).
- From 2015 to 2018, the number of young children receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) decreased from 70 to 40, with five percent of young children participating in TANF in 2018. A similar decline in participation in TANF happened for families in the region during this time period (Table 16 & Table 17).

^{viii} AHCCCS is Arizona's Medicaid agency

Food Insecurity

- The number of young children participating in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) increased slightly in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region between 2015 and 2018, while the number of families participating in SNAP in the region declined slightly over the same time period. The proportion of young children (78%) and families (70%) in the region participating in SNAP in 2018 was higher than in Arizona overall (42% and 39%, respectively) (Table 18 & Table 19).
- Between the 2015-2016 and 2018-2019 school years, around three-quarters of students in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region qualified for free or reduced-price lunches (Table 20).

Employment

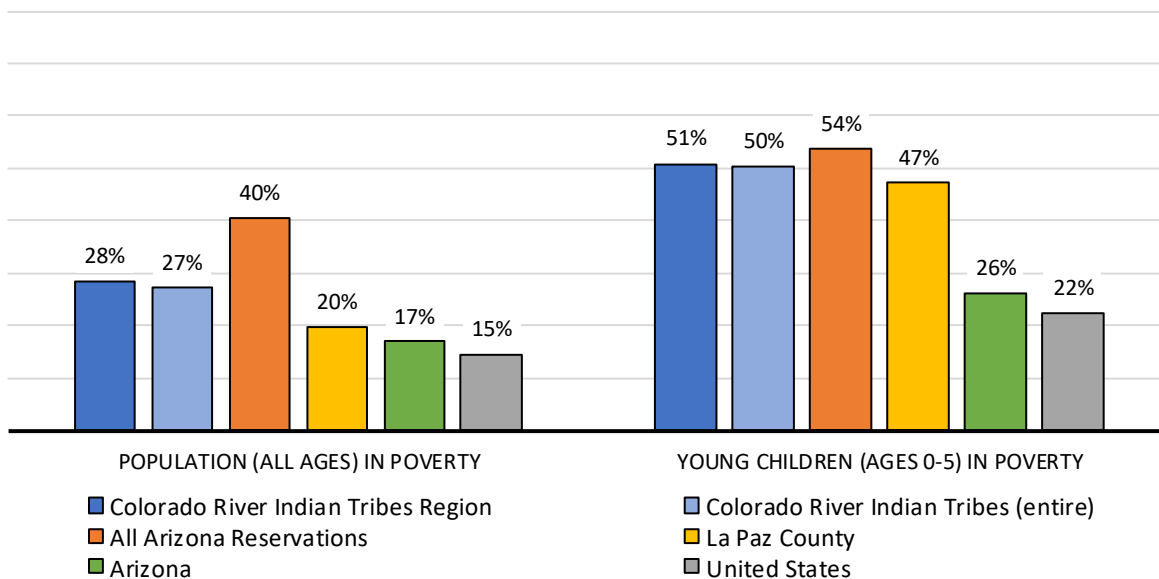
- Eighty-one percent of young children in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region live in families with at least one parent in the labor force, compared to 67 percent in all Arizona reservations combined, and 89 percent in the state. The proportion of children in the region who live with only one parent and such parent is not in the labor force is lower in the region compared to all Arizona reservations (20% and 31%, respectively) (Table 21).
- The average unemployment rate in the region for the 2013-2017 period was 10 percent, about half of the rate in all Arizona reservations combined (21%) (Table 22).

Housing Instability

- Twenty-one percent of households in the region spend 30 percent or more of their income on housing-related costs. This proportion is higher than in all Arizona reservations (16%), but lower than the state (31%) (Table 24).
- Forty-one percent of households in the region have both a smartphone and computer, which is higher than all Arizona reservations (30%) but lower than the state of Arizona (67%). One in three households (32%) in the region do not have a smartphone or computer, a higher proportion than in Arizona overall (12%) (Table 25).
- A higher proportion of residents in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region live in households with a computer and internet connectivity compared to all Arizona reservations (63% vs 38%). Both percentages, however, are much lower than in the state (82%) (Table 26).
- A similar pattern is present in the percentage of children (ages 0-17) living in households with a computer and internet connectivity in the region (63%), all Arizona reservations (41%), and the state (83%) (Table 27).
- Of people living in households with a computer and internet access in the region, 19 percent rely solely on a cellular data plan, nearly twice the proportion in the state (10%), but lower than that in all Arizona reservations combined (25%) (Table 28).

Poverty

Figure 3. Percent of population (all ages) and young children (ages 0-5) living in poverty



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018). American Community Survey five-year estimates 2013-2017, Table B17001

Table 14. Median annual family income

GEOGRAPHY	MEDIAN INCOME FOR ALL FAMILIES	MEDIAN INCOME FOR MARRIED-COUPLE FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN (0-17)	MEDIAN INCOME FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN (0-17), SINGLE MALE HEAD	MEDIAN INCOME FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN (0-17), SINGLE FEMALE HEAD
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	\$41,120	\$49,115	\$16,555	\$18,611
Colorado River Indian Tribes (entire)	\$41,103	\$49,115	\$16,696	\$18,580
La Paz County	\$44,536	\$48,953	\$16,982	\$14,755
Arizona	\$63,812	\$80,533	\$38,650	\$26,907
United States	\$70,850	\$91,621	\$41,054	\$26,141

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018). American Community Survey five-year estimates 2013-2017, Table B19126

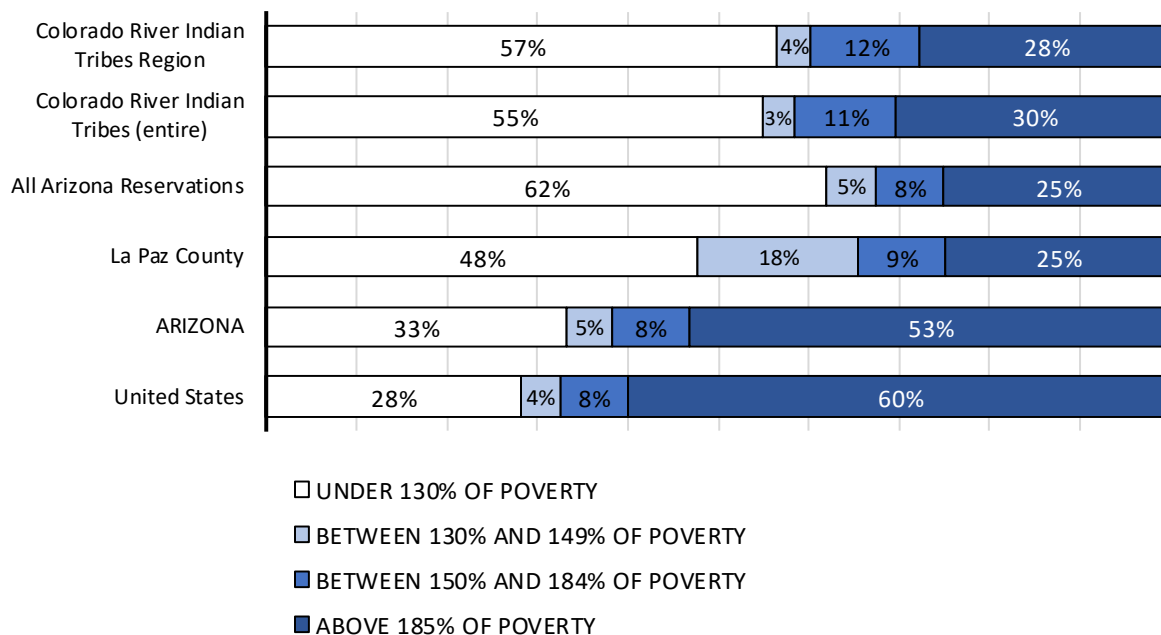
Table 15. Families with young children (ages 0-5) living at various poverty thresholds

GEOGRAPHY	TOTAL NUMBER OF FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN (AGES 0-5)	PERCENT OF FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN (AGES 0-5) UNDER 130% OF POVERTY	PERCENT OF FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN (AGES 0-5) BETWEEN 130% AND 149% OF POVERTY	PERCENT OF FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN (AGES 0-5) BETWEEN 150% AND 184% OF POVERTY	PERCENT OF FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN (AGES 0-5) ABOVE 185% OF POVERTY
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	495	57%	4%	12%	28%
Colorado River Indian Tribes (entire)	528	55%	3%	11%	30%
All Arizona Reservations	8,812	62%	5%	8%	25%
La Paz County	633	48%	18%	9%	25%
Arizona	295,926	33%	5%	8%	53%
United States	13,951,604	28%	4%	8%	60%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018). American Community Survey five-year estimates 2013-2017, Tables B17001 & B17022

Note: Poverty refers to the poverty threshold used by the U.S. Census Bureau to determine whether or not a family lives in poverty based on their income. In 2017, the most recent year of ACS data used in this report, the poverty threshold for a family of four was \$24,848. For more information about poverty thresholds, see <https://www.census.gov/topics/income-poverty/poverty/guidance/poverty-measures.html>

Figure 4. Families with young children (ages 0-5) living at various poverty thresholds



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018). American Community Survey five-year estimates 2013-2017, Tables B17001 & B17022
 Note: Poverty refers to the poverty threshold used by the U.S. Census Bureau to determine whether or not a family lives in poverty based on their income. In 2017, the most recent year of ACS data used in this report, the poverty threshold for a family of four was \$24,848. For more information about poverty thresholds, see <https://www.census.gov/topics/income-poverty/poverty/guidance/poverty-measures.html>

Table 16. Families participating in the TANF program, Fiscal Years 2015 to 2018

GEOGRAPHY	HOUSEHOLDS WITH ONE OR MORE CHILDREN (AGES 0-5)	NUMBER OF FAMILIES PARTICIPATING IN TANF				PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH YOUNG CHILDREN (0-5) PARTICIPATING IN TANF IN 2018
		FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	485	49	59	25	12 to 20	DS
La Paz County	822	77	89	39	12 to 20	DS
Arizona	384,441	18,165	16,399	14,188	12,042	3%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau (2010). 2010 Decennial Census, Summary File 1, Table P20 & Arizona Department of Economic Security, Division of Benefits and Medical Eligibility (2019). Unpublished data received by request.

Table 17. Children participating in the TANF program, Fiscal Years 2015 to 2018

GEOGRAPHY	NUMBER OF YOUNG CHILDREN (AGES 0-5) IN THE POPULATION	NUMBER OF CHILDREN PARTICIPATING IN TANF				PERCENT OF YOUNG CHILDREN (0-5) PARTICIPATING IN TANF IN 2018
		FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	739	70	95	37	40	5%
La Paz County	1,227	115	140	55	49	4%
Arizona	546,609	23,862	22,326	19,614	16,634	3%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau (2010). 2010 Decennial Census, Summary File 1, Table P20 & Arizona Department of Economic Security, Division of Benefits and Medical Eligibility (2019). Unpublished data received by request.

Food Insecurity

Table 18. Families participating in the SNAP program, Fiscal Years 2015 to 2018

GEOGRAPHY	HOUSEHOLDS WITH ONE OR MORE CHILDREN (AGES 0-5)	NUMBER OF FAMILIES PARTICIPATING IN SNAP				PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH YOUNG CHILDREN (0-5) PARTICIPATING IN SNAP IN 2018
		FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	485	374	376	345	341	70%
La Paz County	822	571	566	529	519	63%
Arizona	384,441	179,988	172,014	164,092	151,819	39%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau (2010). 2010 Decennial Census, Summary File 1, Table P20 & Arizona Department of Economic Security, Division of Benefits and Medical Eligibility (2019). Unpublished data received by request.

Table 19. Children participating in the SNAP program, Fiscal Years 2015 to 2018

GEOGRAPHY	NUMBER OF YOUNG CHILDREN (AGES 0-5) IN THE POPULATION	NUMBER OF CHILDREN PARTICIPATING IN SNAP				PERCENT OF YOUNG CHILDREN (0-5) PARTICIPATING IN SNAP IN 2018
		FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	739	531	591	574	573	78%
La Paz County	1,227	803	888	865	856	70%
Arizona	546,609	249,707	258,556	247,418	229,291	42%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau (2010). 2010 Decennial Census, Summary File 1, Table P20 & Arizona Department of Economic Security, Division of Benefits and Medical Eligibility (2019). Unpublished data received by request.

Table 20. Students (all grades) eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, 2015-16 to 2018-19

GEOGRAPHY	STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR FREE OR REDUCED-PRICE LUNCH (2015-16)	STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR FREE OR REDUCED-PRICE LUNCH (2016-17)	STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR FREE OR REDUCED-PRICE LUNCH (2017-18)	STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR FREE OR REDUCED-PRICE LUNCH (2018-19)
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	76%	77%	78%	74%
La Paz County	78%	79%	79%	76%
Arizona	58%	57%	57%	56%

Source: Arizona Department of Education (2019). 2015-16 to 2018-19 Free & Reduced-Price Lunch Data. Custom tabulation of eligibility data.

Employment

Table 21. Parents of young children (ages 0-5) who are or are not in the labor force

GEOGRAPHY	TOTAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN (AGES 0-5) LIVING IN FAMILIES OR SUBFAMILIES	WITH TWO PARENTS, BOTH IN LABOR FORCE	WITH TWO PARENTS, ONE IN LABOR FORCE AND ONE NOT	WITH TWO PARENTS, NEITHER IN LABOR FORCE	WITH ONE PARENT, IN LABOR FORCE	WITH ONE PARENT, NOT IN LABOR FORCE
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	679	16%	27%	0%	38%	20%
Colorado River Indian Tribes (entire)	740	16%	24%	0%	39%	20%
All Arizona Reservations	16,902	13%	14%	3%	40%	31%
La Paz County	891	23%	21%	0%	37%	19%
Arizona	498,102	31%	29%	1%	29%	10%
United States	22,939,897	38%	26%	1%	27%	8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018). American Community Survey five-year estimates 2013-2017, Table B23008

Note: The labor force includes all persons who are currently employed, including those on leave, furlough, or temporarily laid off. Persons who are unemployed but actively looking for work are also considered to be in the labor force. Persons who are not working or looking for work (e.g., retired persons, stay-at-home parents, students) are considered to be "not in the labor force" in the American Community Survey.

Table 22. Labor force participation rate and unemployment rate

GEOGRAPHY	TOTAL POPULATION (AGES 16 AND OLDER)	LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE	UNEMPLOYMENT RATE
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	6,344	60%	10%
Colorado River Indian Tribes (entire)	7,540	57%	10%
All Arizona Reservations	136,081	46%	21%
La Paz County	17,483	41%	10%
Arizona	5,371,341	60%	7%
United States	255,797,692	63%	7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018). American Community Survey five-year estimates 2013-2017, Table B23025

Note: The "labor force participation rate" is the estimated fraction of the population who are in the labor force, either currently working or looking for work. (Persons not in the labor force are neither working nor looking for work, such as retired persons, stay-at-home parents, students, and the disabled.) The "unemployment rate" is the fraction of the labor force who are unemployed but looking for work.

Table 23. Annual unemployment rates, not seasonally adjusted, 2015 to 2018

GEOGRAPHY	ANNUAL UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, 2015	ANNUAL UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, 2016	ANNUAL UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, 2017	ANNUAL UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, 2018
La Paz County	7.4%	6.1%	5.4%	6.2%
Arizona	6.1%	5.4%	4.9%	4.8%

Source: Arizona Labor Statistics (2019). Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS). Retrieved from <https://laborstats.az.gov/local-area-unemployment-statistics>

Housing Instability

Table 24. Households who are paying thirty percent or more of their income for housing

GEOGRAPHY	TOTAL NUMBER OF OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS	PERCENT OF HOUSING UNITS FOR WHICH HOUSING COSTS 30% OF INCOME OR MORE
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	2,632	21%
Colorado River Indian Tribes (entire)	3,351	22%
All Arizona Reservations	49,638	16%
La Paz County	8,798	19%
Arizona	2,482,311	31%
United States	118,825,921	32%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018). American Community Survey five-year estimates 2013-2017, Table B25106

Table 25. Households with and without computers and smartphones

GEOGRAPHY	TOTAL NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS	PERCENT WITH COMPUTER (BUT NO SMARTPHONE)	PERCENT WITH SMARTPHONE (BUT NO COMPUTER)	PERCENT WITH BOTH SMARTPHONE AND COMPUTER	PERCENT WITH NEITHER SMARTPHONE NOR COMPUTER
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	2,632	13%	14%	41%	32%
Colorado River Indian Tribes (entire)	3,351	15%	13%	42%	30%
All Arizona Reservations	49,638	9%	14%	30%	47%
La Paz County	8,798	21%	9%	44%	26%
Arizona	2,482,311	12%	9%	67%	12%
United States	118,825,921	12%	9%	66%	13%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018). American Community Survey five-year estimates 2013-2017, Table B28010

Note: In this table, "computer" includes both desktops and laptops

Table 26. Persons (all ages) in households with and without computers and internet connectivity

GEOGRAPHY	NUMBER OF PERSONS (ALL AGES) LIVING IN HOUSEHOLDS	PERCENT IN HOUSEHOLDS WITH COMPUTER AND INTERNET	PERCENT IN HOUSEHOLDS WITH COMPUTER BUT NO INTERNET	PERCENT IN HOUSEHOLDS WITHOUT COMPUTER
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	8,086	63%	13%	24%
Colorado River Indian Tribes (entire)	9,446	64%	13%	23%
All Arizona Reservations	185,192	38%	21%	40%
La Paz County	20,239	63%	15%	22%
Arizona	6,656,124	82%	9%	9%
United States	312,916,765	83%	9%	9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018). American Community Survey five-year estimates 2013-2017, Table B28005

Table 27. Children (ages 0-17) in households with and without computers and internet connectivity

GEOGRAPHY	NUMBER OF CHILDREN (AGES 0-17) LIVING IN HOUSEHOLDS	PERCENT IN HOUSEHOLDS WITH COMPUTER AND INTERNET	PERCENT IN HOUSEHOLDS WITH COMPUTER BUT NO INTERNET	PERCENT IN HOUSEHOLDS WITHOUT COMPUTER
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	2,150	63%	18%	20%
Colorado River Indian Tribes (entire)	2,331	64%	18%	19%
All Arizona Reservations	57,156	41%	24%	35%
La Paz County	3,398	62%	17%	21%
Arizona	1,619,346	83%	10%	8%
United States	73,392,369	85%	9%	5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018). American Community Survey five-year estimates 2013-2017, Table B28005

Table 28. Households by type of internet access (broadband, cellular data, and dial-up)

GEOGRAPHY	PEOPLE LIVING IN HOUSEHOLDS WITH COMPUTER AND INTERNET (ALL AGES)	PERCENT WITH FIXED BROADBAND WITH CELLULAR DATA PLAN	PERCENT WITH FIXED BROADBAND WITHOUT CELLULAR DATA PLAN	PERCENT WITH CELLULAR DATA PLAN, WITHOUT FIXED BROADBAND	PERCENT WITH DIAL-UP INTERNET ONLY
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	5,099	40%	40%	19%	1%
Colorado River Indian Tribes (entire)	6,033	40%	40%	19%	1%
All Arizona Reservations	71,139	29%	42%	25%	3%
La Paz County	12,718	35%	40%	23%	2%
Arizona	5,475,311	54%	35%	10%	1%
United States	258,531,929	55%	35%	10%	1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018). American Community Survey five-year estimates 2013-2017, Table B28008

Educational Indicators

Why it Matters

Measures of educational engagement and achievement in a community have important implications for the developmental and economic resources available to children and families in that region. Individuals with higher levels of education tend to live longer and healthier lives.¹⁰⁴ Indicators such as school attendance and absenteeism, achievement on standardized testing, high school graduation rates, and adult educational attainment can provide valuable information about a region's educational engagement and success. Early learning can set the stage for future educational achievement, and is discussed more fully in the following section.

School attendance and absenteeism. School attendance and academic engagement early in life can significantly impact the direction of a child's schooling trajectory. Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing more than 10 percent of the school days within a school year, and it affects even the youngest children, with more than 10 percent of U.S. kindergarteners and first graders considered chronically absent.¹⁰⁵ Poor school attendance can cause children to fall behind, leading to lower proficiency in reading and math and increased risk of not being promoted to the next grade.¹⁰⁶ Consistent school attendance is particularly important for children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, the group of children most at risk for chronic absenteeism.^{107,108}

Achievement on standardized testing. A child's third-grade reading comprehension skills have been identified as a critical indicator of future academic success.¹⁰⁹ Students who are at or above grade level reading in third grade are more likely to go on to graduate high school and attend college.¹¹⁰ The link between poor reading skills and risk of dropping out of high school is even stronger for children living in poverty. More than a quarter (26%) of children who were living in poverty and not reading proficiently in third grade did not finish high school. This is more than six times the high school dropout rate of proficient readers.¹¹¹

In 2010, the Arizona legislature, recognizing the importance of early identification and targeted intervention for struggling readers, enacted *Move on When Reading* legislation. As of 2015, the statewide assessment tool for English language arts (ELA), including reading and writing, is Arizona's Measurement of Education Readiness to Inform Teaching (AzMERIT).^{ix,112} AzMERIT scores are used to determine promotion from the third grade in accordance with the *Move on When Reading* policy. *Move on When Reading* legislation states that a student shall not be promoted to fourth grade if their reading score falls far below the third-grade level, as established by the State Board of Education.¹¹³ Exceptions exist for students identified with or

^{ix} AzMERIT was renamed AzM2, a change that will take effect during the 2019-2020 school year.

being evaluated for learning disabilities and/or reading impairments, English language learners, and those who have demonstrated reading proficiency on alternate forms of assessment approved by the State Board of Education.

Graduation rates and adult educational attainment. Ultimately, adult educational attainment speaks to the assets and challenges of a community's workforce, including those who are working with or on behalf of young children and their families. Adults who have graduated from high school have better health and financial stability, lower risk for incarceration, and better socio-emotional outcomes compared to adults who dropped out of high school.^{114,115} Children whose parents have higher levels of education are more likely to have positive outcomes related to school readiness and educational achievement, promoting academic success across generations.¹¹⁶ Given the cascading effect of early education on later academic achievement and success in adulthood, it is critical to provide substantial support for early education and promote policies and programs that encourage the persistence and success of Arizona's children.

What the Data Tell Us

School Attendance and Absenteeism

- Children in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region attend three public elementary schools in the Parker Unified School District: Blake Primary School, Wallace Elementary School, and Le Pera Elementary School. Blake Primary School serves students in preschool through second grade, Wallace Elementary school serves students in third through fifth grade, and Le Pera Elementary School serves students in kindergarten through eighth grade.¹¹⁷ In the 2018-19 school year, there were a total of 594 children enrolled in preschool through third grade at schools in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region (Table 29).
- In the period of school year 2015-2016 to school year 2018-2019, chronic absence rates in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region were similar to rates in La Paz County but notably higher than state chronic absence rates. In 2018-2019, the combined chronic absence rate for children in grades K-3 was 22 percent in the region, similar to La Paz County (21%) but almost twice that in Arizona (12%) (Table 30 & Table 31).
- From school year 2015-2016 to school year 2018-2019, chronic absence rates varied by age in the region, with the highest rates of chronic absences among kindergarteners (30%) and lowest among 1st graders (17%) (Table 32).

Achievement on Standardized Testing

- In the 2017-2018 school year, 123 third-grade students in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region completed the English Language Arts (ELA) portion of the required statewide AzMERIT test. Thirty-four percent of the students attained a passing grade in the ELA test, which is slightly higher than the La Paz County passing rate (31%) but lower than the state rate of 44 percent (Table 33 & Figure 5).
- AzMERIT 3rd grade ELA passing rates in the region have increased steadily over time, from 17 percent in 2015-2016 to 34 percent in 2017-2018 (Figure 6).
- In the 2017-2018 school year, 125 third-grade students in the region completed the required math portion of the AzMERIT test. Fifty-two percent of students in the region obtained a passing grade, similar to the rate statewide (53%) and exceeding that in the county (43%) (Table 34 & Figure 7).
- AzMERIT 3rd grade math passing rates also increased over time in the region, from 33 percent in 2015-2016 to 52 percent in 2017-2018 (Figure 8).

Graduation Rates and Adult Educational Attainment

- Youth in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region attend Parker High School and Parker Alternative School. In 2017, the combined four-year graduation rate for these two schools was 81 percent, slightly higher than the state rate (78%). The combined dropout rate for schools in the region was 4 percent, similar to the state dropout rate of 5 percent (Table 35).
- The four-year high school graduation rates for the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region remained stable from 2015 (79%) to 2017 (81%) and were similar to statewide four-year high school graduation rates (Table 36).
- Dropout rates in the region also remained steady over time and mirrored state rates, with a four percent dropout rate in the region during the 2017-2018 school year compared to five percent statewide (Table 38).
- The educational attainment among adults (25 and older) in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region closely mirrors that in all Arizona reservations combined. Thirty-seven percent of adults in the region have more than a high school education compared to 38 percent in all Arizona reservations. Both proportions, however, are lower than that in the state (62%) (Figure 9).
- Of the 142 births in the region in 2017, 32 percent were to mothers who had more than a high-school education, similar to La Paz County (31%), but much lower than the state proportion (56%) (Table 39).

School Attendance and Absenteeism

Table 29. Students enrolled in preschool through third grade, 2018-19

GEOGRAPHY	PRESCHOOL	KINDERGARTEN	1ST GRADE	2ND GRADE	3RD GRADE
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	24	156	139	122	153
La Paz County	37	191	189	171	191
Arizona	21,238	79,990	81,913	81,951	83,037

Source: Arizona Department of Education (2019). 2018-19 October 1 Enrollments. Custom tabulation of enrollment data facilitated by state agency staff.

Note: Data on enrollments were calculated at the district-level. These numbers represent Blake Primary, Wallace Elementary, and Le Pera Elementary in the Parker Unified School District. See appendix 3 for a full list of districts within the region.

Table 30. Chronic absence rates, Kindergarten through 3rd grade, 2018-19

GEOGRAPHY	TOTAL STUDENTS	STUDENTS WITH CHRONIC ABSENCES	CHRONIC ABSENCE RATE
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	655	146	22%
La Paz County	884	185	21%
Arizona	402,206	46,482	12%

Source: Arizona Department of Education (2019). 2018-19 Chronic Absenteeism Data. Unpublished data received by request.

Note: The definition of chronic absenteeism used in this table includes children who are absent due to chronic illness. Data on this table reflect the combined chronic absence rate for children enrolled at Blake Primary, Wallace Elementary, and Le Pera Elementary in the Parker Unified School District.

Table 31. Chronic absence rates, Kindergarten through 3rd grade, 2015-16 to 2018-19

GEOGRAPHY	CHRONIC ABSENCE RATE (2015-16)	CHRONIC ABSENCE RATE (2016-17)	CHRONIC ABSENCE RATE (2017-18)	CHRONIC ABSENCE RATE (2018-19)
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	20%	21%	24%	22%
La Paz County	18%	20%	22%	21%
Arizona	9%	10%	11%	12%

Source: Arizona Department of Education (2019). 2015-16 to 2018-19 Chronic Absenteeism Data. Unpublished data received by request.

Note: The definition of chronic absenteeism used in this table includes children who are absent due to chronic illness. Data on this table reflect the combined chronic absence rate for children enrolled at Blake Primary, Wallace Elementary, and Le Pera Elementary in the Parker Unified School District.

Table 32. Chronic absence rates for students by grade (Grade K-3), 2015-16 to 2018-19

GEOGRAPHY	CHRONIC ABSENCE RATE (KINDERGARTEN)	CHRONIC ABSENCE RATE (1ST GRADE)	CHRONIC ABSENCE RATE (2ND GRADE)	CHRONIC ABSENCE RATE (3RD GRADE)
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	30%	17%	23%	19%
La Paz County	28%	18%	19%	19%
Arizona	13%	12%	11%	10%

Source: Arizona Department of Education (2019). 2015-16 to 2018-19 Chronic Absenteeism Data. Unpublished data received by request.

Note: The definition of chronic absenteeism used in this table includes children who are absent due to chronic illness. Data on this table reflect the combined chronic absence rate for children enrolled at Blake Primary, Wallace Elementary, and Le Pera Elementary in the Parker Unified School District.

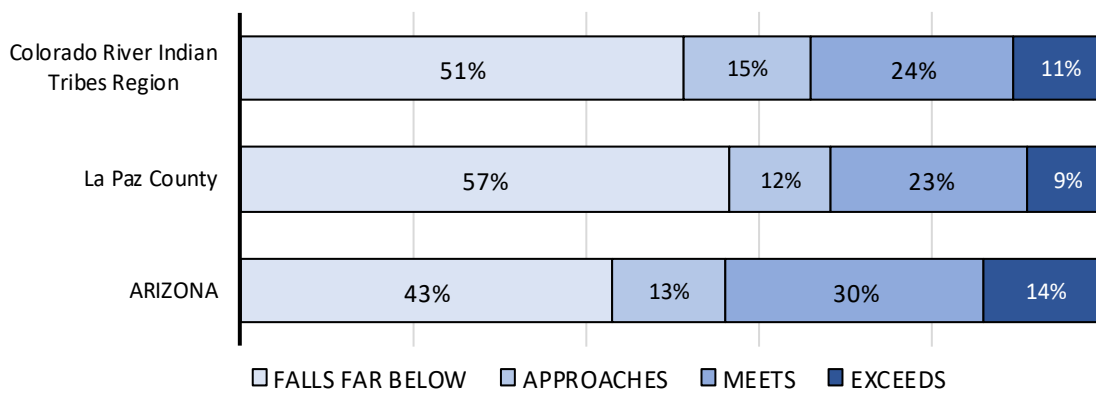
Achievement on Standardized Testing

Table 33. AzMERIT Assessment Results: 3rd Grade English Language Arts, 2017-18

GEOGRAPHY	STUDENTS TESTED	FALLS FAR BELOW	APPROACHES	MEETS	EXCEEDS	PASSING
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	123	51%	15%	24%	11%	34%
La Paz County	175	57%	12%	23%	9%	31%
Arizona	84,922	43%	13%	30%	14%	44%

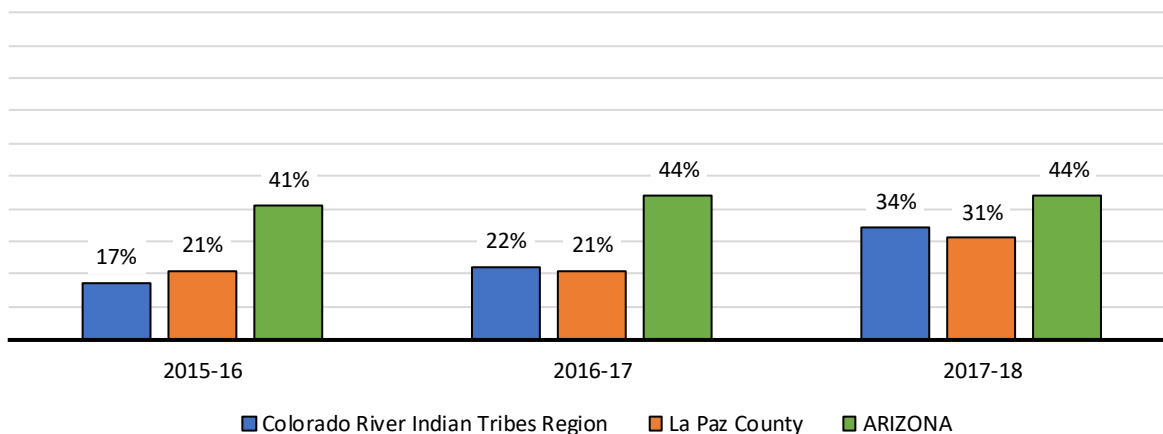
Source: Arizona Department of Education (2019). 2017-18 AzMERIT Assessment Results. Custom tabulation of assessment data. Note: Data on this table reflect results for children enrolled at Blake Primary, Wallace Elementary, and Le Pera Elementary in the Parker Unified School District.

Figure 5. AzMERIT Assessment Results: 3rd Grade English Language Arts, 2017-18



Source: Arizona Department of Education (2019). 2017-18 AzMERIT Assessment Results. Custom tabulation of assessment data. Note: Data on this figure reflect results for children enrolled at Blake Primary, Wallace Elementary, and Le Pera Elementary in the Parker Unified School District.

Figure 6. Trends in passing rates for 3rd-grade English Language Arts AzMERIT, 2015-16 to 2017-18



Source: Arizona Department of Education (2019). 2015-16 to 2017-18 AzMERIT Assessment Results. Custom tabulation of assessment data.

Note: Data on this figure reflect results for children enrolled at Blake Primary, Wallace Elementary, and Le Pera Elementary in the Parker Unified School District.

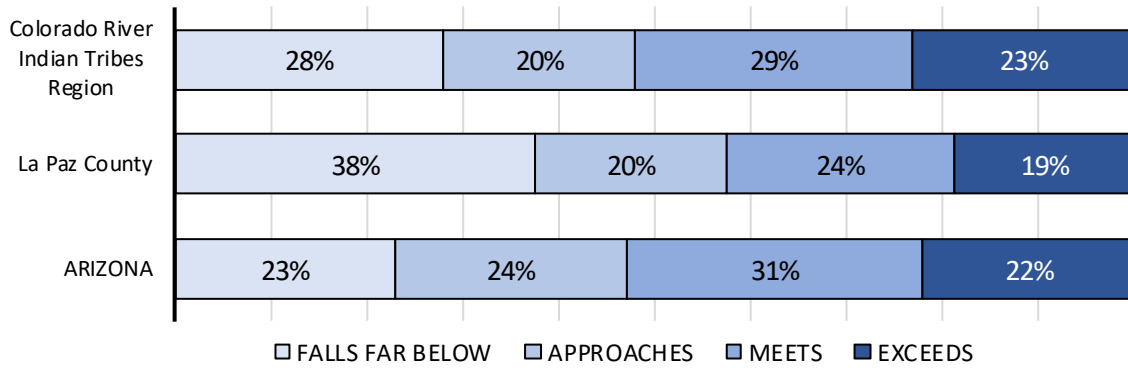
Table 34. AzMERIT Assessment Results: 3rd Grade Math, 2017-18

GEOGRAPHY	NUMBER OF STUDENTS TESTED	FALLS FAR BELOW	APPROACHES	MEETS	EXCEEDS	PASSING
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	125	28%	20%	29%	23%	52%
La Paz County	178	38%	20%	24%	19%	43%
Arizona	85,105	23%	24%	31%	22%	53%

Source: Arizona Department of Education (2019). 2017-18 AzMERIT Assessment Results. Custom tabulation of assessment data.

Note: Data on this table reflect results for children enrolled at Blake Primary, Wallace Elementary, and Le Pera Elementary in the Parker Unified School District.

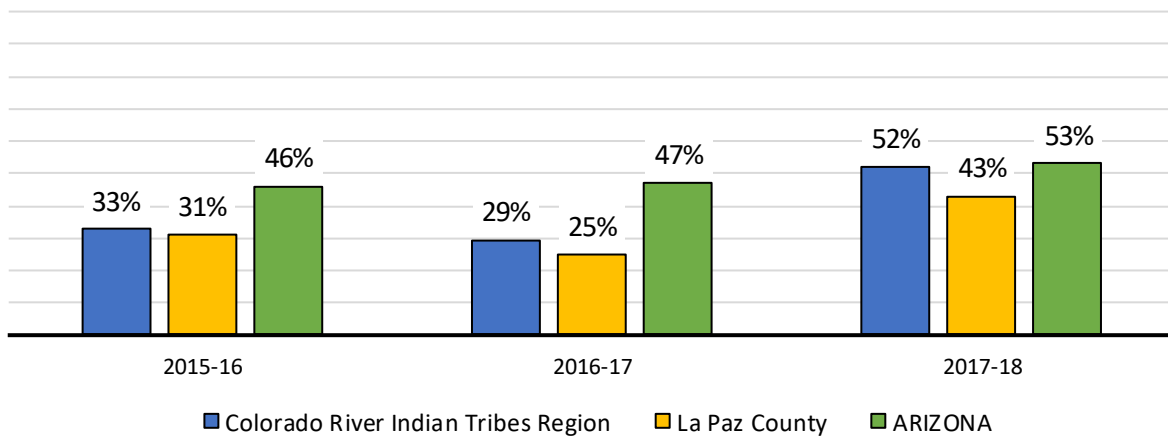
Figure 7. AzMERIT Assessment Results: 3rd Grade Math, 2017-18



Source: Arizona Department of Education (2019). 2017-18 AzMERIT Assessment Results. Custom tabulation of assessment data.

Note: Data on this figure reflect results for children enrolled at Blake Primary, Wallace Elementary, and Le Pera Elementary in the Parker Unified School District.

Figure 8. Trends in passing rates for 3rd-grade Math AzMERIT, 2015-16 to 2017-18



Source: Arizona Department of Education (2019). 2015-16 to 2017-18 AzMERIT Assessment Results. Custom tabulation of assessment data.

Note: Data on this figure reflect results for children enrolled at Blake Primary, Wallace Elementary, and Le Pera Elementary in the Parker Unified School District.

Graduation Rates and Adult Educational Attainment

Table 35. Graduation and dropout rates, 2017

GEOGRAPHY	FOUR-YEAR SENIOR COHORT	FOUR-YEAR GRADUATES	FOUR-YEAR GRADUATION RATE	FIVE-YEAR GRADUATES	FIVE-YEAR GRADUATION RATE	DROPOUT RATE (7TH TO 12TH GRADES)
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	129	104	81%	105	81%	4%
La Paz County	152	124	82%	125	82%	4%
Arizona	84,802	66,363	78%	70,178	82%	5%

Source: Arizona Department of Education (2019). Cohort 2017 Four Year Graduation Rate Data, Cohort 2017 Five Year Graduation Rate Data, and Dropout Rates 2017. Retrieved from <https://www.azed.gov/accountability-research/data/>

Note: Data on this table reflect combined rates for students enrolled at Parker High School and Parker Alternative School.

The 2017 four-year senior cohort is the number of students who are expected to graduate in 2017. It represents all students who enrolled in high school in Arizona for the first time in grade 9 in the 2013-2014 school year, those who enrolled in high school in Arizona for the first time in grade 10 in the 2014-2015 school year, those who enrolled in high school in Arizona for the first time in grade 11 in the 2015-2016 school year, and those who enrolled in high school in Arizona for the first time in grade 12 in the 2016-2017 school year. This group of students provides the denominator that we can compare the number of graduates to in order to calculate the four-year graduation rate.

Table 36. Trends in four-year graduation rates, 2015 to 2017

GEOGRAPHY	FOUR-YEAR GRADUATION RATE (2015)	FOUR-YEAR GRADUATION RATE (2016)	FOUR-YEAR GRADUATION RATE (2017)
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	79%	81%	81%
La Paz County	78%	82%	82%
Arizona	79%	80%	78%

Source: Arizona Department of Education (2019). Cohort 2014-2017 Four Year Graduation Rate Data. Retrieved from <https://www.azed.gov/accountability-research/data/>

Note: Data on this table reflect combined rates for students enrolled at Parker High School and Parker Alternative School.

Table 37. Trends in five-year graduation rates, 2015 to 2017

GEOGRAPHY	FIVE-YEAR GRADUATION RATE (2015)	FIVE-YEAR GRADUATION RATE (2016)	FIVE-YEAR GRADUATION RATE (2017)
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	82%	81%	81%
La Paz County	80%	83%	82%
Arizona	82%	83%	82%

Source: Arizona Department of Education (2019). Cohort 2014-2017 Five Year Graduation Rate Data. Retrieved from <https://www.azed.gov/accountability-research/data/>

Note: Data on this table reflect combined rates for students enrolled at Parker High School and Parker Alternative School.

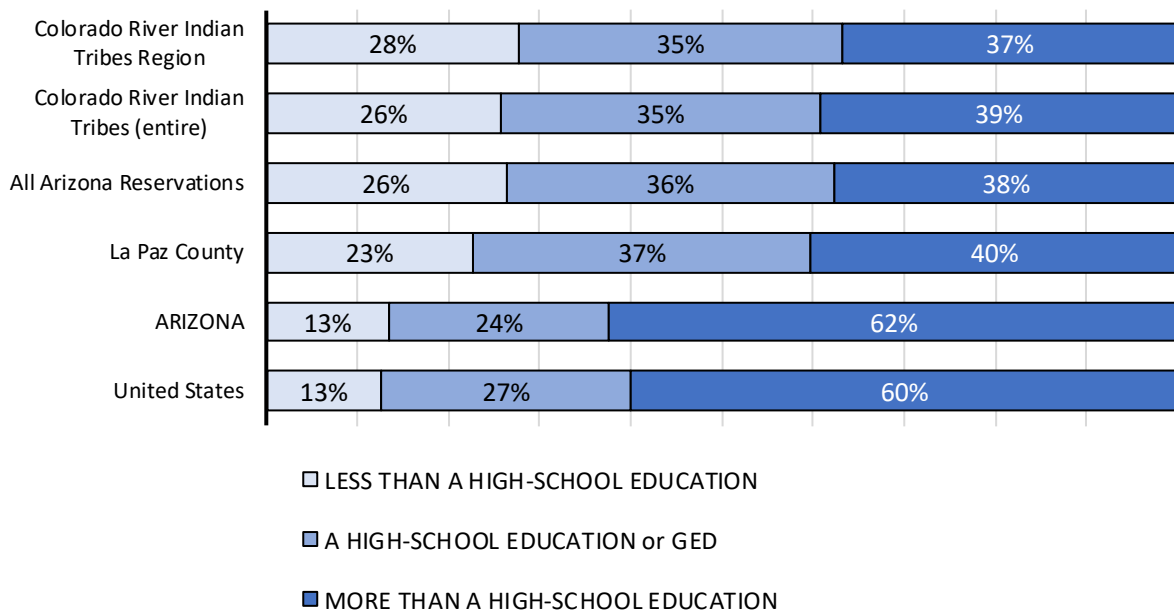
Table 38. Trends in 7th-12th grade dropout rates, 2015-16 to 2017-18

GEOGRAPHY	DROPOUT RATE (2015-16)	DROPOUT RATE (2016-17)	DROPOUT RATE (2017-18)
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	3%	5%	4%
La Paz County	3%	5%	4%
Arizona	4%	5%	5%

Source: Arizona Department of Education (2019). Dropout Rates 2015-2018. Retrieved from <https://www.azed.gov/accountability-research/data/>

Note: Data on this table reflect combined rates for students enrolled at Parker High School and Parker Alternative School.

Figure 9. Level of education for the adult population (ages 25 and older)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018). American Community Survey five-year estimates 2013-2017, Table B15002

Table 39. Level of education for mothers giving birth during calendar year 2017

GEOGRAPHY	TOTAL NUMBER OF BIRTHS IN 2017	MOTHER HAD LESS THAN A HIGH-SCHOOL EDUCATION	MOTHER HAD HIGH-SCHOOL DIPLOMA OR GED	MOTHER HAD MORE THAN HIGH-SCHOOL
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	142	27%	37%	32%
La Paz County	194	27%	39%	31%
Arizona	81,664	17%	26%	56%

Source: ADHS Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. (2019). Arizona Health Status and Vital Statistics.

Note: Due to a small number of births for which the mother's educational attainment is unknown, entries in this table may not sum to 100%.

Early Learning

Why it Matters

Early childhood is an exciting time of rapid physical, cognitive, and social-emotional development. The experiences young children have during these early years are critical for healthy brain development and set the stage for lifelong learning and well-being.^{118,119} Just as rich, stimulating environments can promote development, early negative experiences can have lasting effects. For example, gaps in language development between children from disadvantaged backgrounds and their more advantaged peers can be seen by 18 months of age;¹²⁰ those disparities that persist until kindergarten tend to predict later academic problems.¹²¹

Access to early care and education. Though high-quality early care and education can promote development, families often face barriers in accessing these opportunities for their children. Families living in rural areas are more likely to face an inadequate child care supply, but Arizona families in both urban and rural areas face a gap between the number of young children and the availability of licensed child care.^{122,123,124} In fact, Arizona has a deficit of about 22,230 licensed early care and education slots to meet the needs of working families, without accounting for parents continuing their own education, or those not in the workforce but seeking out early learning programs to help assure their preschool age children are able to make a strong start in school.¹²⁵ Even when early education is available, the cost can be prohibitive. According to the U.S. Department of Education, only 19 percent of four-year-olds in Arizona are enrolled in publicly-funded free or reduced cost preschool programs, compared to 41 percent nationally.¹²⁶ If not enrolled in publicly-funded programs, the annual cost of full-time center-based care for a young child in Arizona is nearly equal to the cost of a year at a public college.^{127,128}

Child care subsidies can be a support for families who have financial barriers to accessing early learning services.¹²⁹ In June 2019, for the first time since the Great Recession, the Arizona Department of Economic Security's (DES) child care subsidy waiting list was suspended, meaning all children who qualify for subsidies are able to receive them, assuming that they are able to find a provider.¹³⁰ This is due to \$56 million in additional federal funds from the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) that was authorized by the State Legislature, and the funding increase has also allowed DES to increase provider reimbursement rates, which may make it easier for families to use their child care subsidies.¹³¹

High quality early care and education. In addition to the early experiences children have in their homes, high quality early care and education services can also promote physical, cognitive, and social-emotional development and health, particularly for children from

disadvantaged backgrounds.^{132,133,134} Children whose education begins in high quality preschool programs repeat grades less frequently, obtain higher scores on standardized tests, experience fewer behavior problems, and are more likely to graduate from high school.¹³⁵ This translates into a return on investment to society through increased educational achievement and employment, reductions in crime, and better overall health of children as they mature into adults.^{136,137} Not only does access to affordable, quality child care make a positive difference for children's health and development, it also allows parents to maintain stable employment and support their families.¹³⁸ The early care education system in tribal communities often consists of a complex network of center-based and home-based care and education settings with funding from varied sources including tribal governments, federal grants, and the Arizona Department of Education.¹³⁹

Establishing that available early care and education programs meet quality standards is important to ensure these early environments support positive outcomes for children's well-being, academic achievement, and success later in life.¹⁴⁰ Providers are considered quality educational environments by the Arizona Department of Economic Security if they receive a Quality First three-star rating or higher (see below) or are accredited by a national organization, such as the Association for Early Learning Leaders or the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).¹⁴¹

High quality early education environments have teachers with more education, experience, and supports that increase their skills in developing positive teacher-child interactions, providing enriching age-appropriate experiences and guiding appropriate behaviors.¹⁴² These quality environments may be particularly important for children with challenging behaviors, because lower teacher-child ratios and access to professional development and early childhood mental health consultation can help avoid preschool expulsion.^{143,144,145}

Quality First is Arizona's Quality Improvement and Rating System (QIRS) for early child care and preschool providers.¹⁴⁶ A Quality First Star Rating represents where along the continuum of quality (1 to 5 stars) a program was rated and how they are implementing early childhood best practices. One star indicates a program is participating in Quality First, is regulated, in good standing, and is making the commitment to work on quality improvement. Three stars indicate that a program is of good quality care, and families can be confident that children are well cared for in such an environment. Five stars indicate the highest level of quality attainable, where families will find low staff-child ratios and group sizes, highly educated personnel, and strong curriculum which optimizes children's comprehensive development.¹⁴⁷ The number of providers across the state that meet quality standards (three-star rating or higher) has increased across the last 5 years such that 25 percent of the 857 participating providers in 2013

met or exceeded quality standards, and 76 percent of 1,032 participating providers in 2019 met or exceeded quality standards.¹⁴⁸

High quality early care and education practices, including lower teacher-child ratios, access to professional development, and early childhood mental health consultation, can help avoid preschool expulsion.^{149,150} Nationally, preschool expulsions and suspensions occur at high rates and disproportionately impact children of color, specifically young Black boys.^{151,152} In 2016, an estimated 50,000 preschoolers were suspended and 17,000 preschoolers expelled nationwide, with Black children 2.2 times more likely to be suspended or expelled than other children.¹⁵³ The U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights began collecting data on preschool suspension and expulsion in 2011 and, as a result of federal changes to the Child Care Development Block Grant in 2014, Arizona began collecting provider-reported data on early learning environment expulsion in 2017.^{154,155} Given the positive impact of early educational experiences on children’s cognitive and emotional development and the negative impact of suspension and expulsion on educational outcomes, it is essential to identify areas with higher rates of expulsion to provide targeted supports.¹⁵⁶

As an alternative to expulsion, early education providers in Arizona have an opportunity to identify young children as being at risk for expulsion and to receive consultation from experts to help intervene in problem behaviors. Consultation is provided through on-site mental health consultation, available for Quality First and some non-Quality First providers in most but not all regions in the state, as well as through a statewide Department of Economic Security (DES)-managed hotline. If that child is then able to remain in the center, this is documented as a prevented expulsion and their case is closed out. The reported number of prevented expulsions of young children receiving subsidies increased from seven in 2017 to 45 in 2018.¹⁵⁷

Young children with special needs. The availability of early learning opportunities and services for young children with special needs is an ongoing concern across the state, particularly in the more geographically remote communities and some tribal communities. Children with special health care needs are defined as “those who have or are at increased risk for a chronic physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional condition and who also require health and related services of a type or amount beyond that required by children generally.”¹⁵⁸ According to the National Survey of Children’s Health, children with special health care needs are more likely to experience more adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)^x than typically-developing children,¹⁵⁹

^x ACEs include 8 categories of traumatic or stressful life events experienced before the age of 18 years. The 8 ACE categories are sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, household adult mental illness, household substance abuse, domestic violence in the household, incarceration of a household member, and parental divorce or separation.

and are at an increased risk for maltreatment and neglect,^{160,161} suggesting they may particularly benefit from high quality teacher-child interactions in classrooms.^{162,163} Nationally, American Indian/Alaska Native children receive special education services at the highest rates (18%) of any racial/ethnic group, with notably higher rates of services than their white (14%) and Hispanic (13%) peers.¹⁶⁴ Almost half (46%) of families with a child with special needs in Arizona have incomes below 200 percent of the federal poverty level, suggesting that even if they can identify an appropriate provider, affording quality care is likely to be a burden.¹⁶⁵

Ensuring all families have access to timely and appropriate screenings for children who may benefit from early identification of special needs can help improve outcomes for these children and their families. Timely intervention can help young children with, or at risk for, developmental delays improve language, cognitive, and socio-emotional development.^{166,167} It also reduces educational costs by decreasing the need for special education.¹⁶⁸ In Arizona, services available to families with children with special needs include those provided through the Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP),¹⁶⁹ the Arizona Department of Education Early Childhood Special Education program,¹⁷⁰ and the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD).¹⁷¹

What the Data Tell Us

Access to Early Care and Education

- During the period covered by this report, early care and education opportunities in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region have included the tribally-operated Colorado River Indian Tribes Head Start, Blake Primary School’s preschool, the Sonshine Center and the Early Learning Academy (ELA).¹⁷² In July 2019, the Sonshine Center closed. The Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Partnership Council collaborated with the Colorado River Indian Tribes to help support the establishment of a new child care center in Parker. The new center, the Early Learning Academy (ELA) opened in April 2020. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, ELA established itself as an Arizona Enrichment Center to provide childcare to families of first responders, healthcare workers and other essential service providers. As of June 2020, ELA is providing care for 40 children. Thirty-five children are receiving scholarships through the Arizona Enrichment Center opportunity. Prior to the operational changes to comply with the new COVID-19 recommendations, ELA had the capacity to serve up to 75 children between birth to 5 years.¹⁷³ There are no tribally-operated child care services in the CRIT Region.
- After accounting for the loss of slots due to the closure of the Sonshine Center and once ELA is under full operation, these early care and education programs will have a combined capacity to serve 278-283 children. Most slots in the region are for children 3-5 years old. All of the Colorado River Indian Tribes Head Start and Blake Primary preschool slots are for children in this age range. Formal child care and early education services for children under the age of three are extremely limited in the region. Only one child care provider, the Early Learning Academy, can serve children in the 0-2 age range (Table 40).
- Recent estimates from the American Community Survey show that early childhood education enrollment rates for preschool-aged children in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region are high. Fifty-three percent of children ages three to four are enrolled in school (i.e. nursery school, preschool, or kindergarten) compared to 41 percent in all Arizona reservations, and 38 percent statewide (Table 41).
- The Colorado River Indian Tribes Region 2018 Needs and Assets Report indicates that participation in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Head Start program is cost-free for all children enrolled. Similarly, children with special needs enrolled in the preschool program at Blake Primary school receive services at no cost to their families. Typically-developing children enrolled in the program do pay a fee of \$10 per day.¹⁷⁴ Estimates from the American Community Survey show that child care costs were relatively higher

in the Colorado River Tribes Indian Region than in the state overall in 2018. At median levels, sending an infant to a licensed center in the region requires almost one-fifth (19%) of a family's income, compared to 16 percent statewide (Table 42).

- Subsidies from the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES) can alleviate some of the burden of child care cost for families. The number of children in the region (not involved with the Department of Child Safety or DCS) receiving DES child care subsidies decreased from 27 in 2015 to 11 in 2018 (Table 43).
- For children involved with the state's child welfare system through DCS, 85 percent of eligible children in the region received DES child care subsidies in 2015. Fewer than 10 DCS-involved children in the region received DES child care subsidies in 2016, 2017, and 2018 (Table 44).
- The proportion of eligible families not using DES child care subsidies in the region increased over time. In 2018, 33 percent of eligible families in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region did not use their child care subsidies, compared to 20 percent in 2015 (Table 45).

High Quality Early Care and Education

- In 2019, a total of 207 children were enrolled at a Quality First provider site in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region. Of all children enrolled at a Quality First provider site in the region, 88 percent were enrolled at a quality-level setting (public 3-5 stars). In 2019, 28 children received Quality First scholarships (Table 46).
- In 2019, two child care providers in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region participated in Quality First, one of which was a quality-level setting (public 3-5 stars) (Table 47).
- The Department of Economic Security (DES) defines early care and education "quality environments" as providers that are accredited by a national organization or providers that have received a state-approved quality indicator that is recognized by the department.^{xi} In 2017, fewer than ten children receiving DES child care subsidies in the region were served in quality environment settings, as defined by DES (Table 48).

^{xi} More information about Arizona's quality educational environments can be found in the DES CCDF State Plan FY2019-FY2021, available at <https://des.az.gov/documents-center>

Young Children with Special Needs

- From the 2015-2016 school year to the 2018-2019 school year, the number of children (ages 3-5) enrolled in special education in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region increased from 33 to 46 (Table 49).
- Of the 46 children in the region enrolled in special education in school year 2018-2019, two-thirds (65%) were diagnosed with a developmental delay (Table 50).
- Since the 2015-2016 school year, the percent of students (grade 1-3) enrolled in special education increased slightly at the regional and state level. During the 2018-2019 school year, 21 percent of students in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region were enrolled in special education, a proportion nearly twice as that in the state (12%) (Table 51).
- In Fiscal Years 2016 and 2017, between 3 and 29 children (ages 0-2) in the region were referred to the Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP) and were found eligible for services. Between 2017 and 2018, active AzEIP cases increased in the region by 11 percent, from 18 to 20 (Table 52 & Table 53).
- Fewer than ten children (ages 0-2) from the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region were served by the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) each year from Fiscal Year 2015 to Fiscal Year 2018. Between Fiscal Year 2015 and Fiscal Year 2018, no children in the age range of three to five years old received DDD services in the region (Table 54 & Table 55).

Access to Early Care and Education

Table 40. Capacity of early care and education providers

	CAPACITY	AGES	DAYS OF CARE
Colorado River Indian Tribes Head Start	183	3-5	M-F
Blake Primary School	20-25	3-4	M-F
Early Learning Academy*	75	0-5	M-F
Sonshine Center**	32	0-5	M-F

Sources: *First Things First (2018)*. Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Partnership Council 2018 Needs and Assets Report; T. Gene, personal communication, June 4, 2020.

*Started operations in April 2020 as an Arizona Enrichment Center providing care for 40 children. Once under full operation, this center will have the capacity to serve up to 75 children.

**Closed as of July 2019.

Table 41. School enrollment for children (ages 3 and 4)

GEOGRAPHY	POPULATION OF CHILDREN (AGES 3-4)	NUMBER ENROLLED IN SCHOOL	PERCENT ENROLLED IN SCHOOL
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	289	154	53%
Colorado River Indian Tribes (entire)	326	165	51%
All Arizona Reservations	6,574	2,673	41%
La Paz County	377	167	44%
Arizona	182,970	69,712	38%
United States	8,190,503	3,892,317	48%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018). American Community Survey five-year estimates 2013-2017, Table B14003

Note: In this table, "school" may include nursery school, preschool, or kindergarten.

Table 42. Cost of center-based care as a percentage of income, 2018

GEOGRAPHY	MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME (ACS 2013-2017)	COST FOR AN INFANT	COST FOR A 1 TO 2 YEAR OLD CHILD	COST FOR A 3 TO 5 YEAR OLD CHILD
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	\$41,120	19%	17%	15%
La Paz County	\$44,536	18%	16%	14%
Arizona	\$63,812	16%	14%	12%

Source: Arizona Department of Economic Security (2019). 2018 Child Care Market Rate Survey. Unpublished data received by request. Arizona Department of Economic Security (2019). 2018 Child Care Market Rate Survey Report. Retrieved from <https://des.az.gov/file/14277/download>.

Table 43. Children receiving DES child care subsidies, 2015 to 2018

GEOGRAPHY	NUMBER OF CHILDREN RECEIVING SUBSIDIES, 2015	NUMBER OF CHILDREN RECEIVING SUBSIDIES, 2016	NUMBER OF CHILDREN RECEIVING SUBSIDIES, 2017	NUMBER OF CHILDREN RECEIVING SUBSIDIES, 2018
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	27	20	10	11
Arizona	19,040	17,784	16,922	19,813

Source: Arizona Department of Economic Security (2019). 2015-2018 Child Care Assistance Data. Unpublished data received by request.

Note: This table reflects children receiving subsidies who are not DCS-involved. Please note that there were reporting anomalies affecting La Paz County data, so data for the county are not shown in this table.

Table 44. DCS-involved children receiving DES child care subsidies, 2015 to 2018

GEOGRAPHY	NUMBER OF DCS CHILDREN RECEIVING SUBSIDIES				PERCENT OF ELIGIBLE DCS CHILDREN RECEIVING SUBSIDIES			
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2015	2016	2017	2018
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	11	<10	<10	<10	85%	DS	DS	DS
La Paz County	13	<10	<10	<10	87%	DS	DS	DS
Arizona	13,098	13,352	12,201	12,219	91%	89%	88%	82%

Source: Arizona Department of Economic Security (2019). 2015-2018 Child Care Assistance Data. Unpublished data received by request.

Table 45. Eligible families not using DES child care subsidies, 2015 to 2018

GEOGRAPHY	FAMILIES NOT USING SUBSIDIES, 2015	FAMILIES NOT USING SUBSIDIES, 2016	FAMILIES NOT USING SUBSIDIES, 2017	FAMILIES NOT USING SUBSIDIES, 2018
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	20%	22%	22%	33%
La Paz County	24%	19%	30%	31%
Arizona	6%	6%	7%	8%

Source: Arizona Department of Economic Security (2019). 2015-2018 Child Care Assistance Data. Unpublished data received by request.

High Quality Early Care and Education

Table 46. First Things First Quality First child data, State Fiscal Year 2019

GEOGRAPHY	QUALITY FIRST SCHOLARSHIPS: NUMBER OF CHILDREN SERVED	NUMBER OF CHILDREN ENROLLED AT A QUALITY FIRST PROVIDER SITE	NUMBER OF CHILDREN ENROLLED AT A QUALITY FIRST PROVIDER SITE WITH A PUBLIC 3-5 STAR RATING	PERCENT OF CHILDREN IN A QUALITY-LEVEL SETTING (PUBLIC 3-5 STARS)
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	28	207	183	88%
Arizona	9,179	62,215	45,278	73%

Source: First Things First (2019). Quality First, a Signature Program of First Thing First. Unpublished data received by request

Note: These data reflect regionally-funded Quality First provider sites and statewide-funded Quality First Redesign provider sites. Data reflect children enrolled at provider sites with a public rating. Star ratings are not publicly available when provider sites decline to publish their initial rating or when a rating is not yet assigned.

Table 47. First Things First Quality First child care provider data, State Fiscal Year 2019

GEOGRAPHY	NUMBER OF CHILD CARE PROVIDERS SERVED	NUMBER OF CHILD CARE PROVIDERS SERVED WITH A PUBLIC 3-5 STAR RATING	PERCENT OF CHILD CARE PROVIDERS SERVED WITH A PUBLIC 3-5 STAR RATING
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	2	1	50%
Arizona	1,119	821	73%

Source: First Things First (2019). Quality First, a Signature Program of First Thing First. Unpublished data received by request

Note: These data reflect regionally-funded Quality First provider sites and statewide-funded Quality First Redesign provider sites. Data reflect children enrolled at provider sites with a public rating. Star ratings are not publicly available when provider sites decline to publish their initial rating or when a rating is not yet assigned.

Table 48. Children receiving DES child care subsidies in quality educational environments, 2017 and 2018

GEOGRAPHY	TOTAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN QUALITY ENVIRONMENTS, 2017	TOTAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN QUALITY ENVIRONMENTS, 2018
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	<10	0
Arizona	13,706	17,295

Source: Arizona Department of Economic Security (2019). Child Care Assistance Dataset. Unpublished data received by request.

Note: These data only reflect children receiving child care subsidies from DES. Quality educational environments are defined by the Department of Economic Security as providers that are accredited by a national organization or providers that have received a state-approved quality indicator that is recognized by the department. More information about Arizona’s quality educational environments can be found in the DES CCDF State Plan FY2019-FY2021, available at <https://des.az.gov/documents-center>

Young Children with Special Needs

Table 49. Children (ages 3-5) Enrolled in Special Education, 2015-16 to 2018-19

GEOGRAPHY	CHILDREN (AGES 3-5) IN SPECIAL EDUCATION (2015-16)	CHILDREN (AGES 3-5) IN SPECIAL EDUCATION (2016-17)	CHILDREN (AGES 3-5) IN SPECIAL EDUCATION (2017-18)	CHILDREN (AGES 3-5) IN SPECIAL EDUCATION (2018-19)
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	33	32	39	46
La Paz County	44	42	43	47
Arizona	14,295	15,257	16,159	16,432

Source: Arizona Department of Education (2019). 2015-16 to 2018-19 Special Education Enrollments. Unpublished data received by request.

Table 50. Children (ages 3-5) Enrolled in Special Education by Type of Disability, 2018-19

GEOGRAPHY	CHILDREN (AGES 3-5) IN SPECIAL EDUCATION	DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY	SPEECH OR LANGUAGE IMPAIRMENT	PRE-SCHOOL SEVERE DELAY	AUTISM	HEARING IMPAIRMENT	OTHER DISABILITIES
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	46	65%	DS	DS	DS	DS	DS
La Paz County	47	66%	DS	DS	DS	DS	DS
Arizona	16,432	42%	39%	12%	3%	1%	3%

Source: Arizona Department of Education (2019). 2018-19 Special Education Enrollments. Unpublished data received by request.

Table 51. Percent of Students (Grade 1-3) Enrolled in Special Education, 2015-16 to 2018-19

GEOGRAPHY	STUDENTS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION (2015-16)	STUDENTS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION (2016-17)	STUDENTS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION (2017-18)	STUDENTS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION (2018-19)
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	18%	16%	20%	21%
La Paz County	18%	14%	18%	19%
Arizona	11%	11%	12%	12%

Source: Arizona Department of Education (2019). 2015-16 to 2018-19 Special Education Enrollments. Unpublished data received by request.

Table 52. Children referred to and found eligible for AzEIP, Federal Fiscal Years 2016 and 2017

GEOGRAPHY	NUMBER OF CHILDREN (AGES 0-2) REFERRED TO AzEIP, FFY2016	NUMBER OF CHILDREN (AGES 0-2) ELIGIBLE FOR AzEIP, FFY2016	PERCENT OF REFERRALS FOUND ELIGIBLE, FFY2016	NUMBER OF CHILDREN (AGES 0-2) REFERRED TO AzEIP, FFY2017	NUMBER OF CHILDREN (AGES 0-2) ELIGIBLE FOR AzEIP, FFY2017	PERCENT OF REFERRALS FOUND ELIGIBLE, FFY2017
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	12 to 28	3 to 27	DS	21 to 29	3 to 27	DS
La Paz County	3 to 27	3 to 27	DS	16 to 32	3 to 27	DS
Arizona	16,063	9,383	58%	16,344	9,770	60%

Source: Arizona Department of Economic Security (2019). AZEIP Service Dataset. Unpublished data received by request.

Table 53. AzEIP caseloads, 2017 and 2018

GEOGRAPHY	CUMULATIVE ACTIVE AzEIP CASES, 2017	CUMULATIVE ACTIVE AzEIP CASES, 2018	PERCENT CHANGE IN AzEIP CASELOADS FROM 2017 TO 2018
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	18	20	+11%
La Paz County	21	24	+14%
Arizona	10,934	11,600	+6%

Source: Arizona Department of Economic Security (2019). AZEIP Service Dataset. Unpublished data received by request.

Table 54. Children (ages 0-2) receiving services from DDD, State Fiscal Years 2015 to 2018

GEOGRAPHY	CHILDREN (AGES 0-2) RECEIVING DDD SERVICES, SFY2015	CHILDREN (AGES 0-2) RECEIVING DDD SERVICES, SFY2016	CHILDREN (AGES 0-2) RECEIVING DDD SERVICES, SFY2017	CHILDREN (AGES 0-2) RECEIVING DDD SERVICES, SFY2018	PERCENT CHANGE FROM 2015 TO 2018
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	<10	<10	<10	<10	DS
La Paz County	<10	<10	<10	<10	DS
Arizona	3,948	4,095	4,505	5,012	+27%

Source: Arizona Department of Economic Security (2019). 2015-2018 Division Developmental Disabilities Data. Unpublished data received by request.

Table 55. Children (ages 3-5) receiving services from DDD, State Fiscal Years 2015 to 2018

GEOGRAPHY	CHILDREN (AGES 3-5) RECEIVING DDD SERVICES, SFY2015	CHILDREN (AGES 3-5) RECEIVING DDD SERVICES, SFY2016	CHILDREN (AGES 3-5) RECEIVING DDD SERVICES, SFY2017	CHILDREN (AGES 3-5) RECEIVING DDD SERVICES, SFY2018	PERCENT CHANGE FROM 2015 TO 2018
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	0	0	0	0	DS
La Paz County	<10	0	0	0	DS
Arizona	887	898	1,049	1,154	+30%

Source: Arizona Department of Economic Security (2019). 2015-2018 Division Developmental Disabilities Data. Unpublished data received by request.

Child Health

Why it Matters

The physical and mental health of both children and their parents are important for optimal child development and well-being. Starting with the mother's health before pregnancy, many factors influence a child's health.¹⁷⁵ Exposures and experiences in utero, at birth, and during the early years set the stage for health and well-being throughout a child's life.^{176,177} Access to health insurance and preventive care influence not only a child's current health, but long-term development and future health.^{178,179,180} Various health care services, depending on the region, are available to members of federally-recognized Indian tribes from Indian Health Service (IHS) facilities and/or other tribally-administered health care facilities.^{181,182}

Access to health services. The ability to obtain health care is critical for supporting the health of pregnant mothers and young children. Health care during pregnancy, or prenatal care, can reduce maternal and infant mortality and complications during pregnancy.^{183,184} In the early years of a child's life, well-baby and well-child visits allow clinicians to assess and monitor the child's development and offer developmentally appropriate information and guidance to parents.¹⁸⁵ Families without health insurance are more likely to skip these visits, and are less likely to receive preventive care for their children, or care for health conditions and chronic diseases.^{186,187} Thus, access to health insurance is an indicator of children's access to health services. Children who lack health insurance are also more likely to be hospitalized and to miss school.¹⁸⁸ Despite being eligible to receive health care services through Indian Health Service (IHS) facilities and/or tribally-operated facilities, Native communities often struggle to access adequate, high quality care. Services and funding are often limited at IHS facilities,¹⁸⁹ and eligibility for IHS services alone does not meet the minimum essential coverage requirement under the Affordable Care Act.¹⁹⁰ Transportation is a challenge in many rural tribal regions, which can also limit access to care. Close to one in 5 households on tribal lands do not have a vehicle available (17%), which is more than double the proportion of households without a vehicle statewide (7%).¹⁹¹

Maternal, infant, and child health. A number of factors occurring before conception and in utero influence child health, making characteristics of pregnant women important determinants of the birth and developmental outcomes of their children. Pregnancy during the teen years is associated with a number of health concerns for infants, including neonatal death, sudden infant death syndrome, and child abuse and neglect.¹⁹² Teenaged mothers (and fathers) themselves are less likely to complete high school or college, and more likely to require public assistance and to live in poverty than their peers who are not parents.^{193,194,195}

In addition to age, a mother's health status before, during, and after pregnancy influences her child's health. Women who are obese before they become pregnant are at a higher risk of birth complications and neonatal and infant mortality than women who are normal weight before pregnancy.^{196,197} Babies born to obese women are at risk for chronic conditions later in life such as diabetes and heart disease.¹⁹⁸ Preterm birth, in addition to being associated with higher infant and child mortality, often results in longer hospitalization, increased health care costs, and longer-term impacts such as physical and developmental impairments. Babies born at a low-birth weight (less than 5 pounds, 8 ounces) are also at increased risk of infant mortality and longer-term health problems such as diabetes, hypertension and cardiac disease.¹⁹⁹

Maternal mental health is a factor for children's well-being as well. Maternal depression during and after pregnancy negatively influences the mother's ability to maintain a healthy pregnancy as well as meet the demands of motherhood and form a secure attachment with her baby.^{200,}
²⁰¹ Quality preconception counseling and early-onset prenatal care can help reduce some of these risks for poor prenatal and postnatal outcomes by providing information, conducting screenings, and supporting an expectant mother's health and nutrition.²⁰²

Substance use disorders. A mother's use of substances such as drugs and alcohol also has implications for her baby. Babies born to mothers who smoke are more likely to be born early (pre-term), have low birth weight, die from sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and have weaker lungs than babies born to mothers who do not smoke.^{203,204} Opiate use during pregnancy, either illegal or prescribed, has been associated with neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS), a group of conditions that causes infants exposed to these substances in the womb to be born exhibiting withdrawal symptoms.²⁰⁵ This can create longer hospital stays, increase health care costs and increase complications for infants born with NAS. Infants exposed to cannabis (marijuana) in utero often have lower birth weights and are more likely to be placed in neonatal intensive care compared to infants whose mothers had not used the drug during pregnancy.²⁰⁶

Parental substance abuse also has significant impacts on family wellbeing. According to the National Survey of Children's Health, young children in Arizona are more than twice as likely to live with someone with a problem with alcohol or drugs than children in the U.S. as a whole (9.8 percent compared to 4.5 percent).²⁰⁷ Children of parents with substance use disorders are more likely to be neglected or abused and face a higher risk of later mental health and behavioral health issues, including developing substance use disorders themselves.^{208,209} Substance abuse treatment and supports for parents and families grappling with these issues can help to ameliorate the short and long-term impacts on young children.²¹⁰ Because of the impact of historical trauma and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), in Native American communities, interventions to address substance use among youth and adults are often trauma-informed, culturally-grounded and community-based.²¹¹

Nutrition and weight status. After birth, a number of factors have been associated with improved health outcomes for infants and young children. One factor is breastfeeding, which has been shown to reduce the risk of ear, respiratory and gastrointestinal infections, SIDS, overweight, and type 2 diabetes.²¹² The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends exclusive breastfeeding for about 6 months, and continuing to breastfeed as new foods are introduced for 1 year or longer.²¹³ American Indians have the lowest breastfeeding rate nationwide. There is a movement to reclaim breastfeeding among Native women to benefit the health of the mother, child, and community. In one example of an effort to address this issue, the Indian Health Service (IHS) has been tasked to make all IHS birthing hospitals baby-friendly, which includes breastfeeding support as part of maternity care.²¹⁴

A child's weight status can have long-term impacts on health and well-being. Nationwide, an estimated 3 percent of children ages 2-19 are underweight, 16.6 percent are overweight, and 18.5 percent are obese.^{215,216} Obesity can have negative consequences on physical, social, and psychological well-being that begin in childhood and continue into and throughout adulthood.²¹⁷ Higher birth weight and higher infancy weight, as well as lower-socioeconomic status and low-quality mother-child relationships, have all been shown to be related to higher childhood weight and increased risk for obesity and metabolic syndrome (which is linked to an increase risk of heart disease, stroke, and diabetes).^{218, 219}

Oral health. Oral health and good oral hygiene practices are important to children's overall health. Tooth decay and early childhood cavities can have short- and long-term consequences including pain, poor appetite, disturbed sleep, lost school days, and reduced ability to learn and concentrate.²²⁰ A national study showed that low-income children were more likely than higher income children to have untreated cavities.²²¹ Despite high percentages of young Arizona children who have preventative dental care visits (68.4%) compared to the national average (57.8%), there is a relatively high percentage who have had decayed teeth or cavities (11.1%) compared to those across the nation overall (7.7%).²²² Low-income children in Arizona, specifically, are more likely to have untreated cavities and less likely to have had an annual dental visit than their higher-income peers.²²³ According to a 2015 study, among kindergarteners, American Indian children in Arizona had significantly higher incidences of decay (75% AIAN versus 52% all races), and untreated decay (48% AIAN versus 24% all races), relative to all kindergarteners.²²⁴

First Things First's Oral Health strategy was able to provide 24,664 children birth to age 5 with a dental screening, and 16,837 children with a fluoride varnish in the Arizona State Fiscal Year 2019.²²⁵ Many children had untreated tooth decay and other oral health needs identified through the screenings. Further, attempts were made to connect children to dental homes who either did not already have a dental home or who needed dental care.

Childhood immunizations. Immunization against preventable diseases protects children and the surrounding community from illness and potentially death. In order to ensure community immunity of preventable diseases, which helps to protect unvaccinated children and adults, rates of vaccination in a community need to remain high.²²⁶

Illness and injury. Asthma is the most common chronic illness affecting children²²⁷, and it is more prevalent among boys, Black children, American Indian or Alaska Native children, and children in low-income households.^{228,229} The total healthcare costs of childhood asthma in the United States are estimated to be between \$1.4 billion and \$6.4 billion, but these costs could be reduced through better management of asthma to prevent hospitalizations.²³⁰ Unintentional injuries are the leading cause of death for children in Arizona²³¹ and nationwide.²³² It is estimated that as many as ninety percent of unintentional injury- related deaths could be preventable through better safety practices, such as use of proper child restraints in vehicles and supervision of children around water.²³³ Children in rural areas are at higher risk of unintentional injuries than those who live in more urban areas, as are children in Native communities, suggesting that injury prevention is an especially salient need in these areas.^{234,235}

One useful metric for evaluating child health in Arizona are the Healthy People objectives. These science-based objectives define priorities for improving the nation's health and are updated every 10 years. Understanding where Arizona mothers and children fall in relation to these current national benchmarks (Healthy People 2020) can help highlight areas of strength in relation to young children's health and those in need of improvement in the state. The Arizona Department of Health Services monitors state level progress towards a number of maternal, infant and child health objectives for which data are available at the county level, including increasing the proportion of pregnant women who receive prenatal care in the first trimester; reducing low birth weight; reducing preterm births; and increasing abstinence from cigarette smoking among pregnant women.²³⁶

What the Data Tell Us

Access to Health Services

- In the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region, 17 percent of residents (all ages) lack health insurance coverage, a percent that is lower than in all Arizona reservations (22%) but higher than the state of Arizona (12%). The proportion of young children (ages 0-5) who are uninsured is lower in the region (5%) than in all Arizona reservations (16%) and the state (7%). It is important to note that the U.S. Census Bureau does not consider coverage by the Indian Health Service (IHS) to be insurance coverage (Table 56 & Figure 10).
- In 2017, the most recent year for which data are available, AHCCCS (Arizona's Medicaid program) paid for 67 percent of the 142 births in the region, while IHS paid for 13 percent (Table 57).

Maternal, Infant, and Child Health

- In 2017, 18.3 percent of the 142 births in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region were to mothers who received no prenatal care in the first trimester, a percentage that meets the Healthy People 2020 target of no more than 22.1 percent. In contrast, both La Paz County (25.8%) and the state (26.4%) did not meet the Healthy People 2020 target (Table 58).
- The Colorado River Indian Tribes Region also met the Healthy People 2020 targets for low birth-weight and preterm birth in 2017. However, the percentage of births to mothers using tobacco (7.7%) in the region was higher than the state (4.7%) and much higher the Healthy People 2020 target of less than 1.4 percent (Table 59).

Child Immunizations

- Across all required immunizations, with the exception of Hepatitis A, children in child care in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region had high immunization rates and met the Healthy People 2020 targets during the 2017-2018 school year (Table 61).
- In school year 2018-2019, vaccination rates among kindergarteners in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region were high, with all Healthy People 2020 targets met (Table 61 & Table 62).
- Immunization exemptions among children in child care and kindergarteners in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region were notably lower than the state overall, however

exemptions increased slightly over time since the 2016-2017 school year (Table 63 & Table 64).

Illness and Injury

- In the period from 2015 to 2018, there were fewer than six non-fatal inpatient hospitalizations of young children for unintentional injuries in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region (Table 65).
- From 2015 to 2017, there were fewer than six inpatient hospitalizations and 19 emergency room visits for asthma among young children in the region (Table 66).
- From 2015 to 2018, there were 228 non-fatal emergency room visits for unintentional injuries for young children in the region. Reasons for these non-fatal emergency room visits were similar across the region, county, and state, with falls (46%) and being 'struck by or against' an object or person (15%) the most common (Table 67).
- There were fewer than six child deaths in the Colorado River Indian Tribes region between 2015 and 2017 (Table 69).

Access to Health Services

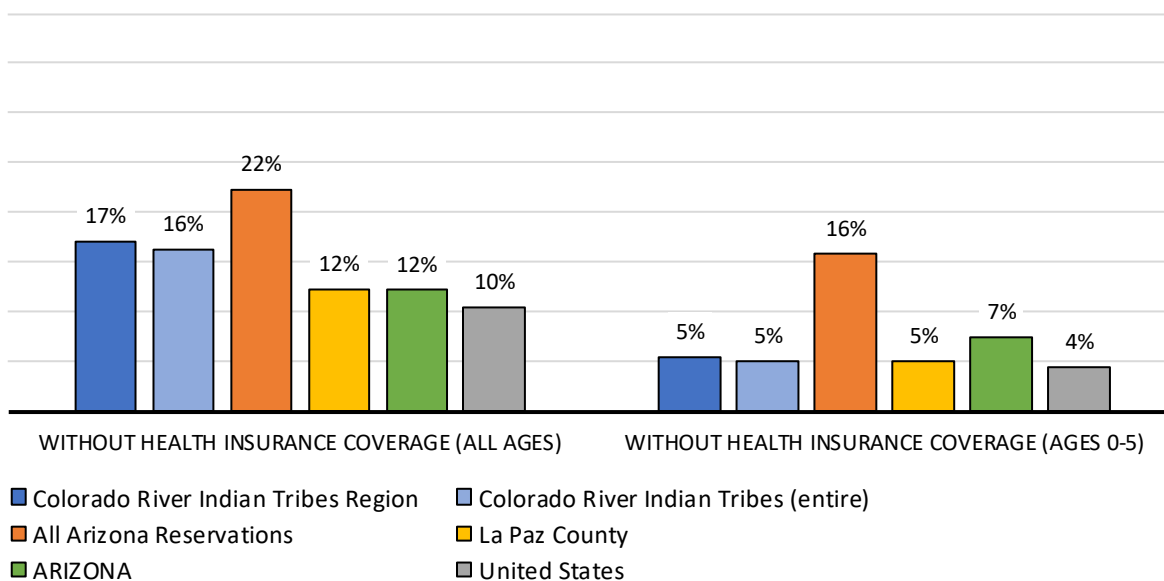
Table 56. Health insurance coverage

GEOGRAPHY	POPULATION (ALL AGES)	PERCENT WITHOUT HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ALL AGES)	POPULATION OF YOUNG CHILDREN (AGES 0-5)	PERCENT WITHOUT HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (AGES 0-5)
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	8,124	17%	767	5%
Colorado River Indian Tribes (entire)	9,484	16%	835	5%
All Arizona Reservations	186,018	22%	18,649	16%
La Paz County	20,309	12%	1,040	5%
Arizona	6,701,990	12%	520,741	7%
United States	316,027,641	10%	23,832,080	4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018). American Community Survey five-year estimates 2013-2017, Table B27001

Note: This table excludes persons in the military and persons living in institutions such as college dormitories. People whose only health coverage is the Indian Health Service (IHS) are considered “uninsured” according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Figure 10. Health insurance coverage for the population (all ages) and for young children (ages 0 to 5)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018). American Community Survey five-year estimates 2013-2017, Table B27001

Note: This figure excludes persons in the military and persons living in institutions such as college dormitories. People whose only health coverage is the Indian Health Service (IHS) are considered 'uninsured' according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Table 57. Payors for births during calendar year 2017

GEOGRAPHY	TOTAL NUMBER OF BIRTHS IN 2017	BIRTHS PAID BY AHCCCS	BIRTHS PAID BY IHS	BIRTHS SELF-PAY
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	142	67%	13%	DS
La Paz County	194	72%	10%	4%
Arizona	81,664	53%	1%	5%

Source: ADHS Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. (2019). Arizona Health Status and Vital Statistics.

Maternal, Infant, and Child Health

Table 58. Prenatal care for mothers giving birth during calendar year 2017

GEOGRAPHY	TOTAL NUMBER OF BIRTHS IN 2017	MOTHERS WHO HAD NO PRENATAL CARE	MOTHERS WHO HAD NO PRENATAL CARE IN FIRST TRIMESTER	MOTHERS WHO HAD FEWER THAN FIVE PRENATAL VISITS
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	142	DS	18.3%	8%
La Paz County	194	3%	25.8%	9%
Arizona	81,664	3%	26.4%	8%
Healthy People 2020 target			22.1%	

Source: ADHS Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. (2019). Arizona Health Status and Vital Statistics.

Table 59. Various risk factors for births during calendar year 2017

GEOGRAPHY	TOTAL NUMBER OF BIRTHS IN 2017	LOW BIRTH-WEIGHT	PRETERM (LESS THAN 37 WEEKS)	NICU ADMISSIONS	MOTHER USED TOBACCO	MOTHER YOUNGER THAN 18	MOTHER YOUNGER THAN 20
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	142	4.2%	8.5%	DS	7.7%	DS	8%
La Paz County	194	3.6%	7.7%	DS	9.8%	DS	8%
Arizona	81,664	7.5%	9.3%	7%	4.7%	2%	6%
Healthy People 2020 targets		7.8%	9.4%		1.4%		

Source: ADHS Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. (2019). Arizona Health Status and Vital Statistics.

Child Immunizations

Table 60. Cases of infectious diseases among young children (ages 0-5), 2015-2018 cumulative

GEOGRAPHY	INFLUENZA	RESPIRATORY SYNCYTIAL VIRUS (RSV)	VARICELLA	PERTUSSIS	HAEMOPHILUS INFLUENZAE	MUMPS
La Paz County	20	13	<6	<6	<6	<6
Arizona	5,449	4,201	70	51	31	<6

Source: Arizona Department of Health Services. (2019). 2015-2018 Child Infectious Disease Data. Custom data tabulation from requested data.

Note: These numbers include both confirmed and probable cases. There were zero reported cases of meningococcal meningitis or measles.

Table 61. Children in child care with required immunizations, 2017-18

GEOGRAPHY	NUMBER OF CHILDREN ENROLLED IN CHILD CARE	DTAP	POLIO	MMR	HIB	HEPATITIS-A	HEPATITIS-B	VARICELLA
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	40	92.5%	100.0%	100.0%	97.5%	72.5%	97.5%	100.0%
La Paz County	19	78.9%	78.9%	78.9%	78.9%	63.2%	78.9%	89.5%
Arizona	86,829	92.4%	94.2%	94.9%	94.2%	85.5%	93.3%	94.7%
Healthy People 2020 targets		90.0%	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%	85.0%	90.0%	90.0%

Source: Arizona Department of Health Services (2019). 2018-19 Child Care Immunization Data. Custom data tabulation from requested data; Arizona Department of Health Services (2019). Childcare Immunization Coverage by County, 2018-2019 School Years. Retrieved from <https://www.azdhs.gov/preparedness/epidemiology-disease-control/immunization/index.php#reports-immunization-coverage>

Note: Data reflect rates at Sonshine Center and Blake Primary preschool. No centers or preschools in the region reported immunization data to ADHS in the 2018-19 school year, so data in this table reflect rates during the 2017-18 school year. The hepatitis A vaccine series (2 doses) is only required in Maricopa County child care settings, but is recommended in all other Arizona counties.

Table 62. Kindergarteners with required immunizations, 2018-19

GEOGRAPHY	ENROLLED (2018-19)	DTAP (2018-19)	POLIO (2018-19)	MMR (2018-19)	HEPATITIS B (2018-19)	VARICELLA (2018-19)
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	154	97.4%	97.4%	96.8%	97.4%	98.1%
La Paz County	154	97.4%	97.4%	96.8%	97.4%	98.1%
Arizona	79,981	92.7%	93.3%	93.0%	94.4%	95.6%
Healthy People 2020 targets		95.0%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%

Source: Arizona Department of Health Services (2019). 2018-19 Kindergarten Immunization Data. Custom data tabulation from requested data; Arizona Department of Health Services (2019). Kindergarten Immunization Coverage by County, 2018-2019 School Years. Retrieved from <https://www.azdhs.gov/preparedness/epidemiology-disease-control/immunization/index.php#reports-immunization-coverage>

Note: Data in this table reflect combined immunization rates for students enrolled at Le Pera Elementary and Blake Primary kindergartens.

Table 63. Child care immunization exemption rates, 2016-17 to 2018-19

GEOGRAPHY	RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION (2016-17)	RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION (2017-18)	RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION (2018-19)	EXEMPT FROM EVERY REQUIRED VACCINE (2017-18)	EXEMPT FROM EVERY REQUIRED VACCINE (2018-19)
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	1.9%	2.5%	DS	2.5%	DS
La Paz County	1.1%	3.3%	10.5%	1.7%	10.5%
Arizona	3.9%	4.3%	4.5%	2.9%	3.0%

Source: Arizona Department of Health Services (2019). 2016-2017 to 2018-19 Child Care Immunization Data. Custom data tabulation from requested data; Arizona Department of Health Services (2019). Childcare Immunization Coverage by County, 2016-17 to 2018-2019 School Years. Retrieved from <https://www.azdhs.gov/preparedness/epidemiology-disease-control/immunization/index.php#reports-immunization-coverage>

Note: No child care centers reported immunizations data to ADHS in 2018-2019. Data for 2017-2018 reflect rates at Sonshine Center and Blake Primary preschool. For 2016-2017 data reflect rates at Lil Blessings Inc and Blake Primary preschool.

Table 64. Kindergarten immunization exemption rates, 2016-17 to 2018-19

GEOGRAPHY	PERSONAL BELIEF EXEMPTION (2016-17)	PERSONAL BELIEF EXEMPTION (2017-18)	PERSONAL BELIEF EXEMPTION (2018-19)	EXEMPT FROM EVERY REQUIRED VACCINE (2017-18)	EXEMPT FROM EVERY REQUIRED VACCINE (2018-19)
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	1.5%	1.4%	1.9%	1.4%	1.9%
La Paz County	1.7%	1.3%	1.9%	1.3%	1.9%
Arizona	4.9%	5.4%	5.9%	3.5%	3.8%

Source: Arizona Department of Health Services (2019). 2016-2017 to 2018-19 Kindergarten Immunization Data. Custom data tabulation from requested data; Arizona Department of Health Services (2019). Kindergarten Immunization Coverage by County, 2016-17 to 2018-2019 School Years. Retrieved from <https://www.azdhs.gov/preparedness/epidemiology-disease-control/immunization/index.php#reports-immunization-coverage>

Note: Data in this table reflect combined immunization rates for students enrolled at Le Pera Elementary and Blake Primary kindergartens.

Illness and Injury

Table 65. Non-fatal hospitalizations of young children (ages 0-5) for unintentional injuries, 2015-2018 cumulative

GEOGRAPHY	NUMBER OF NON-FATAL INPATIENT HOSPITALIZATIONS FOR CHILDREN (AGES 0-5), 2015-2018 TOTALS	MOST COMMON REASON FOR HOSPITALIZATION	SECOND MOST COMMON REASON FOR HOSPITALIZATION
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	<6	DS	DS
La Paz County	10	DS	DS
Arizona	3,015	Falls (33%)	Poisoning (15%)

Source: Arizona Department of Health Services (2019). 2015-2018 Hospital Discharge Data. Unpublished data received by request.

Note: Hospital discharge data are based on the place of residence of the individual who was hospitalized.

Table 66. Asthma hospitalizations and emergency-room visits for unintentional injuries, 2015-2017 cumulative

GEOGRAPHY	NUMBER OF INPATIENT HOSPITALIZATIONS FOR ASTHMA (AGES 0 TO 5, EXCEPT NEWBORNS), 2015-2017 TOTALS	AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY (DAYS) FOR ASTHMA HOSPITALIZATION (AGES 0-5 EXCEPT NEWBORNS), 2015-2017	NUMBER OF EMERGENCY ROOM VISITS FOR ASTHMA (AGES 0 TO 5, EXCEPT NEWBORNS), 2015-2017 TOTALS
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	<6	DS	19
La Paz County	<6	DS	26
Arizona	2,232	1.9	12,812

Source: Arizona Department of Health Services (2019). 2015-2017 Hospital Discharge Data. Unpublished data received by request.

Note: Hospital discharge data are based on the place of residence of the individual who was hospitalized.

Table 67. Non-fatal emergency-room visits by young children (ages 0-5) for unintentional injuries, 2015-2018 cumulative

GEOGRAPHY	NUMBER OF NON-FATAL EMERGENCY ROOM VISITS FOR CHILDREN (AGES 0-5), 2015-2018 TOTALS	MOST COMMON REASON FOR EMERGENCY ROOM VISIT	SECOND MOST COMMON REASON FOR EMERGENCY ROOM VISIT
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	228	Falls (46%)	Struck by or against (15%)
La Paz County	340	Falls (47%)	Struck by or against (15%)
Arizona	181,068	Falls (46%)	Struck by or against (14%)

Source: Arizona Department of Health Services (2019). 2015-2018 Hospital Discharge Data. Unpublished data received by request.

Notes: "Struck" denotes being struck by or against an object or person, not including vehicles. Hospital discharge data are based on the place of residence of the individual who was hospitalized.

Table 68. Infant mortality, calendar year 2017

GEOGRAPHY	INFANT DEATHS WITHIN 7 DAYS OF BIRTH, 2017	INFANT MORTALITY RATE (WITHIN 1 YEAR; PER 1,000 LIVE BIRTHS), 2017
La Paz County	<6	DS
Arizona	234	5.6
Healthy People 2020 target		6.0

Source: Arizona Department of Health Services (2019). 2018 Child Mortality Data. Unpublished data received by request.

Table 69. Child mortality, 2015-2017 cumulative

GEOGRAPHY	TOTAL NUMBER OF CHILD DEATHS (AGES 0-4), 2015 TO 2017	TOTAL NUMBER OF CHILD DEATHS (AGES 0-17), 2015 TO 2017
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	<6	<6
La Paz County	<6	<6
Arizona	1,682	2,357

Source: Arizona Department of Health Services (2019). 2018 Child Mortality Data. Unpublished data received by request.

Family Support and Literacy

Why it Matters

Families and caregivers play a critical role as their child’s first and most important teacher. Positive and responsive early relationships and interactions support optimal brain development during a child’s earliest years and lead to better social, physical, academic, and economic outcomes later in life.^{237,238,239,240} Parental and family involvement is positively linked to academic skills and literacy in preschool, kindergarten, and elementary school.²⁴¹ Children benefit when their families have the knowledge, resources, and support to use positive parenting practices, and support their child’s healthy development, nutrition, early learning, and language acquisition. Specifically, knowledge of positive parenting practices and child development has been identified as one of five key protective factors that improve child outcomes and reduce the incidence of child abuse and neglect.^{xii,242}

Early literacy. Parental and family involvement is positively linked to academic skills and literacy in preschool, kindergarten and elementary school.²⁴³ Early literacy promotion, through singing, telling stories, and reading together, is so central to a child’s development that the American Academy of Pediatrics has emphasized it as a key issue in primary pediatric care, aiming to make parents more aware of their important role in literacy.²⁴⁴ A child’s reading skills when entering elementary school have been shown to strongly predict academic performance in later grades, emphasizing the importance of early literacy for future academic success.^{245,246} Home-based literacy practices between parents and caregivers and young children, specifically, have been shown to improve children’s reading and comprehension, as well as children’s motivation to learn.^{247,248} However, low-income families may face additional barriers to home-based literacy practices, including limited free time with children, limited access to books at home, and a lack of knowledge of kindergarten readiness.²⁴⁹ Communities may employ many resources to support families in engaging with their children, including through targeted programs like home visitation programs and “stay and play” programs, or participating in larger initiatives like Read On Arizona or the national “Reach Out & Read” program.²⁵⁰

Arizona children’s reading scores are below the national average. Of all the students in Arizona, Native American students face the biggest need for improved literacy.²⁵¹ The Bureau of Indian

^{xii} The Center for the Study of Social Policy developed Strengthening Families: A Protective Factors Framework™ to define and promote quality practice for families. The research-based, evidence-informed Protective Factors are characteristics that have been shown to make positive outcomes more likely for young children and their families, and to reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect. Protective factors include: parental resilience, social connections, concrete supports, knowledge of parenting and child development, and social and emotional competence of children.

Education (BIE)'s Family and Child Education (FACE) program was developed to address some of the unique early literacy needs of American Indian children. The program includes training for staff at child care centers, parenting education and support, Native American language and cultural learning, and reading and learning practices for the family and child.²⁵²

Adverse childhood experiences. Unfortunately, not all children are able to begin their lives in positive, stable environments. Experiences early in life can have lasting impacts on an individual's mental and physical health. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) have been linked to future risky health behaviors (such as smoking, drug use, and alcoholism), chronic health conditions (including diabetes, depression, and obesity), poorer life outcomes (such as lower educational achievement and increased lost work time), and early death.²⁵³ Alternatively, Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs), including positive parent-child relationships and feelings of safety and support, have been shown to have similarly cumulative, though positive, long-term impacts on mental and relational health.²⁵⁴ Nationally and in Arizona, very young children are most at risk for child abuse, neglect, and fatalities from abuse and neglect. In 2017, children five years old and younger made up more than half (55%) of child maltreatment victims in Arizona.²⁵⁵ Future poor health outcomes are also more likely as an individual's ACE score increases.²⁵⁶ Children in Arizona are considerably more likely to have experienced two or more ACEs (27.3%), compared to children across the country (8.3%).²⁵⁷ These children and their families may require specific, targeted resources and interventions in order to reduce harm and prevent future risk.²⁵⁸ In Native American communities, where historical trauma compounds the effects of ACEs, healing may take place through an integration of healthcare-based interventions (physical, behavioral, and mental health), and interventions that build on the strength of culture and community.^{259, 260, 261}

Mental and behavioral health. Behavioral health supports, both for children and caregivers, are often needed to address exposure to adverse childhood events. Infant and toddler mental health development involves the young child's developing capacity to "experience, regulate and express emotions; form close interpersonal relationships; and explore the environment and learn."²⁶² When young children experience stress and trauma they often suffer physical, psychological, and behavioral consequences and have limited responses available to react to those experiences. Understanding the behavioral health of mothers is also important for the well-being of Arizona's young children. Mothers dealing with behavioral health issues such as depression may not be able to perform daily caregiving activities, form positive bonds with their children, or maintain relationships that serve as family supports.²⁶³

Child removals and foster care. There are situations where the harm in remaining with their family is determined to be too great to a child and they are removed from their home, either temporarily or permanently. Children involved in foster care systems often have physical and

behavioral health issues, in addition to the social-emotional needs brought on by being removed from a parent’s care.²⁶⁴ Foster parents often need education, support and resources to ensure they are able to successfully care for foster children who may have these added health needs. According to a 2015 Arizona Department of Child Safety Independent Review, focusing on evidence-based targeted interventions for families at risk of child removal—including home visitation, positive parenting programs, and family-based therapy—may help lower this risk, thus reducing placements in the foster care system.²⁶⁵ In accordance with the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 (ICWA), many tribal governments manage their own child welfare systems and state systems must work cooperatively with them.²⁶⁶ ICWA established federal guidelines that are to be followed when an Indian child enters the welfare system in all state custody proceedings. Under ICWA, an Indian child’s family and tribe are able and encouraged to be actively involved in the decision-making that takes place regarding the child, and may petition for tribal jurisdiction over the custody case. ICWA also mandates that states make every effort to preserve Indian family units by providing family services before an Indian child is removed from his or her family, and after an Indian child is removed through family reunification efforts.²⁶⁷

What the Data Tell Us

Family Involvement

- According to the First Things First Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Partnership Council 2018 Needs and Assets Report, one of the needs in the region is raising awareness for parents around developmental milestones so they can better identify possible delays and get the necessary care for their children on time.²⁶⁸
- The Colorado River Indian Tribes Region 2018 Needs and Assets Report also points out that there is a need in the region for increasing parents' knowledge of the importance of early childhood education and for finding ways to reach out to a large audience about this topic. More multi-generation community events with a strong cultural component could help foster a positive environment conducive to healthy family living.²⁶⁹

Child Removals and Foster Care

- Child Welfare services in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region are provided by the Department of Health and Social Services. The First Things First Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Partnership Council 2018 Needs and Assets Report indicates that for Fiscal Year 2012-2013 there were 141 referrals for child abuse and neglect received by the tribe's Child Protective Services. Of those, 33 (or 23%) were for child abuse, 109 (or 77%) were for neglect, and 14 (or 10%) were for sexual abuse. After investigations were conducted on these referrals, a total of 97 (or 69%) were determined to be substantiated.²⁷⁰
- In April of 2014 there were 158 child welfare cases (ages birth to 17), of which 104 (66%) were cases where the children had been placed with relatives and 14 (9%) were Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) cases. During the same month, there were 30 children (birth to 17) placed in foster care. In August of 2014 there were six tribally licensed foster homes available in the region with a combined capacity of 16 beds.²⁷¹

Systems Coordination among Early Childhood Programs and Services

Why it Matters

From November 2016 to June 2017, First Things First convened the second Arizona Early Childhood Task Force, comprised of diverse leaders from across the state. The goal of the task force was to create an ambitious, yet attainable, statewide five-year plan for First Things First and Arizona’s early childhood system. Building from the model early-childhood system developed in 2010, the task force identified six desired outcomes, one of which is “When the early childhood system is successful, everyone will benefit from living in communities where the early childhood system is high-quality, centered on children and families, coordinated, integrated and comprehensive.” First Things First’s role in building this system is to foster cross-system collaboration among local, state, federal, and tribal organizations to improve the coordination and integration of programs, services, and resources for young children and their families.

Through system building, First Things First connects various components of the early childhood system to create a more holistic system that promotes shared results for children and families. Agencies that work together are often easier for families to access, and the services they provide are more responsive to those families’ needs. Coordination efforts may also increase agencies’ capacity to deliver services by identifying and addressing gaps in the service delivery continuum. By supporting a variety of coordination efforts, First Things First aims to create a high quality, interconnected, and comprehensive system of early-childhood service delivery that enhances children’s overall development and that is timely, culturally responsive, family driven, and community based. Determining how these efforts are affecting each of the 28 regions and their families can help inform services, programs, and policy decisions to benefit families and young children throughout the state.

What the Data Tell Us

In the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region, collaboration with the Colorado River Indian Tribes Tribal Council has been essential in establishing a new childcare center in the community of Parker and the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region. In the summer of 2019, the region lost its only child care center outside of Head Start. The Colorado River Indian Tribes Regional Council, in partnership with a new child care provider and the Colorado River Indian Tribal Council, will support the start-up of a new child care center in SFY20 and SFY21. This collaboration is supporting the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region and town of Parker not only to re-establish a child care center, but also to provide access to quality early care and education through participation in Quality First, which will support families and help young children achieve academic and life-skills success.

Additionally, First Things First is facilitating cross-regional service provider meetings in a countywide effort between providers serving families in La Paz County and throughout the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region. The purpose of the service provider meetings is to improve service coordination between La Paz County and the tribal community. The service provider meetings, convened by First Things First's Service Coordinator, give a space where service providers can share their services, contact area, and trainings and identify areas of possible collaboration. Within in the first year of meeting, two goals have emerged. The first goal is to establish an overall resource list for other providers to share with families and to identify where they can direct families to resources. The second goal is to establish an overall referral system with local and countywide service providers to provide wrap around services to families. The referral system is currently in development to enhance this collaborative approach to screening, identifying, and providing intervention and resources to young children.

Communication, Public Information and Awareness

Why it Matters

Public awareness of the importance of early childhood development and health is critical in building a comprehensive, effective early childhood system in Arizona. Building public awareness and support for early childhood impacts individual behaviors as well as the broader objectives of system building. For the general public, information and awareness is the first step in taking positive action in support of children birth to 5. This could include a range of actions—from influencing their personal networks by sharing early childhood information to actively encouraging community leaders to support programs and services for young children. For parents and other caregivers, awareness is the first step to engaging in programs or behaviors that will better support their child’s health and development.

There is no single communications strategy that will achieve the goal of making early childhood an issue that more Arizonans value and prioritize. Therefore, integrated strategies that complement and build on each other are key to any successful strategic communications effort. Employing a range of communications strategies to share information—from traditional broad-based tactics such as paid media advertising to grassroots, community-based tactics such as community outreach—ensures that diverse audiences are reached more effectively across multiple media platforms. A thoughtful and disciplined combination of methods of delivering information is required to ensure multiple messaging touch-points for diverse audiences: families, civic organizations, faith communities, businesses, local leaders, and others.

What the Data Tell Us

Since State Fiscal Year 2011, First Things First (FTF) has led a collaborative, concerted effort to build public awareness and support across Arizona employing integrated communications strategies that now include:

- strategic messaging and branding
- community outreach
- community awareness
- social media
- digital content marketing
- earned media
- paid media advertising

Progress toward building support for children birth to 5 can be measured by changes in awareness, attitudes and behaviors, as demonstrated through key results of a periodic statewide survey and through tactical impact measures. The most recent statewide survey was held in September 2018. Key results of this statewide survey—which was comprised of both a general phone survey and an online survey of parents of young children specifically—included the following:

- Those who agree that the state should ensure all children have access to early childhood services increased from 80% in 2012 to 84% in 2018.
 - Among parents, this measure increased from 81% in 2016 (the first available parent survey results) to 87% in 2018.
- Those who agree that a child who received early education and healthcare services before age 5 is more likely to succeed in school and beyond increased from 82% in 2012 to 88% in 2018.
 - Among parents, agreement increased from 85% in 2016 to 87% in 2018.
- Those who agree that the state should put the same priority on early education as it does on K-12 education increased from 62% in 2012 to 72% in 2018.
 - Among parents, agreement increased from 69% in 2016 to 74% in 2018.

While understanding and supporting early childhood in general is critical, it's also important that Arizonans have a trustworthy source of early childhood resources and know about the

availability of early childhood resources, programs and tools. For this reason, building awareness of FTF as a credible source is critical. Results of the most recent statewide survey show that, while some progress has been made, there is still more to be done to increase awareness about FTF.

- In the 2018 general survey, 87% of respondents had never heard of FTF, compared to 89% in 2012.
 - Among parents specifically, more had heard of FTF, with 66% stating they had never heard of FTF, compared to 69% in 2016.

While this statewide survey offers a measure of broad changes in attitude and awareness, specific tactical measures of awareness and support-building strategies employed by FTF offer another point of information. These include:

- FTF implemented three annual statewide awareness campaigns since the last regional needs and assets reporting period. The SFY17-SFY18 campaign—Help Them Get There—shared messaging about the importance of the early years to future school and life success and that parents’ everyday positive interactions with babies, toddlers and preschoolers promote healthy development. The SFY19 campaign—Givers of Care—focused specifically on the important role of caregivers and quality early learning environments.
- These paid campaigns reached a large number of Arizonans, measured through the total number of impressions, which directly impacts awareness. Traditional media impressions refer to television, radio, cinema and billboard ads while digital media impressions refer to online ads which appear on both desktop and smartphone devices. These statewide impressions—which measure the estimated number of views of FTF ads—are detailed below.

Table 70. First Things First media awareness campaign impressions, SFY2017-SFY2019

	SFY17	SFY18	SFY19
Traditional media impressions	10 million	17 million	11 million
Digital media impressions	66 million	100 million	76 million

Source: First Things First (2019). Communications Strategy Data. Unpublished data received by request

- In addition, targeted digital advertising allows geographically-based targeting of audiences within regions with the ability to measure the number of click-throughs that digital ads garnered. The click-throughs delivered viewers to the FTF website. In SFY19, digital advertising led to a statewide total of 521,652 clicks-throughs to the FTF website where families could access more information and resources.
- In the area of social media, engagement with FTF early childhood online platforms has grown over the years. Particular success has been seen in the growth of Facebook Page Likes for FTF, which grew from just 3,000 in 2012 to 142,600 in 2019. Content is also distributed through Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram.
- Since inception in SFY17, FTF’s digital content marketing strategy which targets parents and families with engaging and informative video and blog posts via website, social media and email has expanded its reach. In SFY19, 40 original, high-quality content pieces were published.
- In SFY19, an online searchable database of early childhood programs funded by FTF in all the regions launched. In the first six months, over 24,187 visits were logged.

Engaging others is critical to reaching across diverse geographic areas and expanding the reach of early childhood information. FTF specifically works to engage parents’ most trusted messengers, including pediatricians. In SFY19, FTF created a toolkit for health providers to help them better understand and share information on the statewide free Birth to 5 Helpline. This toolkit was distributed to attendees of the annual conference of the Arizona Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. Other statewide awareness partnerships included creation and distribution of a grocery list tip pad for parents and caregivers sharing Read On Arizona’s Smart Talk tips, a digital content sharing partnership with Expect More Arizona and partnering with the Arizona Association for the Education of Young Children on a social media campaign promoting Week of the Young Child.

Table 71. FTF Engagement of Early Childhood Supporters and champions, SFY2019

GEOGRAPHY	NUMBER OF SUPPORTERS	NUMBER OF CHAMPIONS	NUMBER OF SUPPORTER AND CHAMPION ACTIONS DURING FY2019
Arizona	6,258	1,170	940

Source: First Things First. (2019). Communications data. Unpublished data received by request

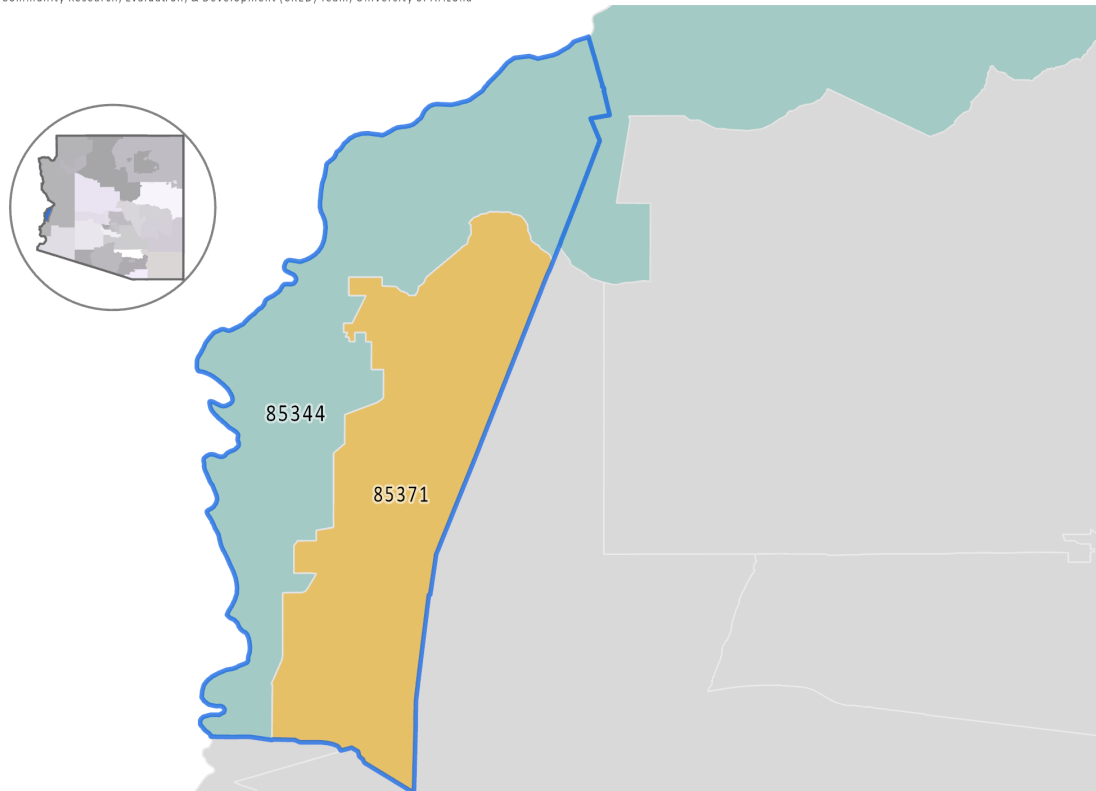
First Things First has also led a concerted effort to build awareness among policymakers at all levels (federal, tribal, state and municipal) of the importance of early childhood. This includes: in-office meetings with elected leaders to provide general information on early childhood, as well as discuss the impact of proposed legislation; regular communication to policymakers with updates on early childhood research and the work of FTF (such as a quarterly email newsletter for policymakers and their staff); and site tours of FTF-funded programs to allow policymakers to see the impact of early childhood investments in their area. In SFY19, FTF also launched ACT4KIDS, a text-based system that alerts participants to timely developments in early childhood policy and opportunities to engage with policymakers. In its first nine months of implementation, more than 700 Arizonans had signed up to participate in ACT4KIDS.

In addition, FTF actively participates in the Arizona Early Childhood Alliance—comprised of more than 50 early childhood system leaders like the United Ways, the state affiliates of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, Southwest Human Development, Children’s Action Alliance, Read On Arizona, Stand for Children, Expect More Arizona and the Helios Foundation—represent the united voice of the early childhood community in advocating for early childhood programs and services. For the past three years, the Alliance has also led an annual Early Childhood Day at the Legislature, which have drawn hundreds of Arizonans to the state Capitol to engage with policymakers and show their support for early childhood development and health.

Appendix 1: Map of Zip Codes of the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region

Figure 11. Map of the ZIP codes in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region

Map by Community Research, Evaluation, & Development (CRED) Team, University of Arizona



Custom map by the Community Research, Evaluation, & Development (CRED) Team using shapefiles obtained from First Things First and the U.S. Census Bureau 2019 TIGER/Line Shapefiles (<https://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/geo/shapefiles/index.php>).

Appendix 2: Zip Codes of the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region

Table 72. Zip Code Tabulation Areas (ZCTAs) of the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region

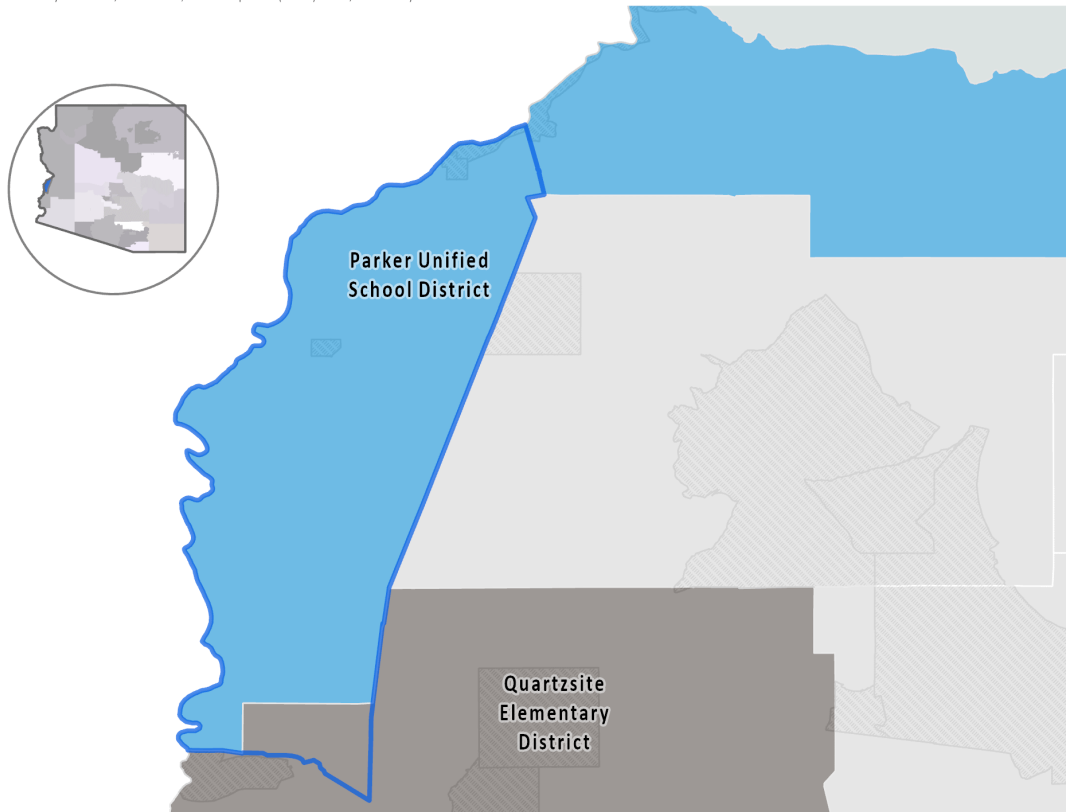
ZIP CODE TABULATION AREA (ZCTA)	TOTAL POPULATION	POPULATION (AGES 0-5)	TOTAL NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS	HOUSEHOLDS WITH ONE OR MORE CHILDREN (AGES 0-5)	PERCENT OF ZCTA'S TOTAL POPULATION LIVING IN THE COLORADO RIVER INDIAN TRIBES REGION	THIS ZCTA IS SHARED WITH
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	7,077	739	2,336	485		
85344	6,658	669	2,206	442	72.8%	La Paz/Moh ave
85371	419	70	130	43	100.0%	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2010). 2010 Decennial Census, Summary File 1, Tables P1, P4, & P20

Appendix 3: Map of School Districts in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region

Figure 12. Map of the school districts in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region

Map by Community Research, Evaluation, & Development (CRED) Team, University of Arizona



Custom map by the Community Research, Evaluation, & Development (CRED) Team using shapefiles obtained from First Things First and the U.S. Census Bureau 2019 TIGER/Line Shapefiles (<https://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/geo/shapefiles/index.php>).

Table 73. School Districts in the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region

ZIP CODE TABULATION AREA (ZCTA)	SCHOOLS IN DISTRICT	K-3RD GRADE STUDENTS IN DISTRICT	PERCENT OF K-3RD GRADES STUDENTS IN REGION	THIS DISTRICT IS SHARED WITH
Colorado River Indian Tribes Region	6	570		
Parker Unified School District	6	570	100%	

Source: Arizona Department of Education (2019). FY 2018 & FY 2019 Enrollment Data. Custom tabulation facilitated by agency staff.

Note: This table only contains Districts/LEAs with enrolled K-3rd grade students physically located within regional boundaries. It does not reflect the residence of students that attend these schools. It does not include high school districts. These are the districts and charter operators from which data on preschool to 3rd grade students were drawn for the tables and figures presented in this report. The percentage shown in the "Percent of K-3rd grade students in the region" column was used to apportion district-level enrollment counts to the region. All other data were aggregated at the school level. The "Schools in district/LEA" and "K-3rd grade students in district/LEA" columns reflect totals for the district, not only the portion within the region. Quartzsite Elementary District overlaps the lands of the Colorado River Indian Tribe Region, but has no schools located within the region. Parker Unified School District also overlaps with the geography of the First Things First La Paz/Mohave Region

Appendix 4: Data Sources

Arizona Department of Administration, Office of Employment and Population Statistics. (2019). Local area unemployment statistics (LAUS). Retrieved from <https://laborstats.az.gov/local-area-unemployment-statistics>

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