

From birth to age 5, a child's brain grows more than at any other time in life. And research shows that the quality of a child's experiences in the early childhood years helps shape how their brain develops.

Created by Arizonans, First Things First partners with families and communities to improve the early learning, health and development of our state's youngest children so they are ready for success in kindergarten and beyond.

With statewide oversight and accountability, decisions are made at the local level about how to invest funds from tobacco revenues dedicated to early childhood programs and services. Community leaders rely on data and invest in proven programs and innovative strategies.



90% of brain growth happens before kindergarten.



Three main areas of focus for First Things First

1 Early Learning

Improving and expanding access to quality early care and education.

Quality First:

Quality First is a program of First Things First, Arizona's early childhood agency. Quality First partners with child care and preschool providers to improve the quality of early learning across Arizona. Scholarships also are funded to help more infants, toddlers and preschoolers access quality early care and learning.

Learn more at

QualityFirstAZ.com



1,434

Child care and preschool providers were committed to continuous quality improvement of their early learning programs through Quality First.



8,262

Quality First scholarships helped the families of 8,262 babies, toddlers and preschoolers afford a quality early education for their kids.

2 Strong Families

Strengthening families in their role as their child's first teacher.

Funded programs: FTF supports families as they nurture and teach their children by providing voluntary health and education services in their homes and communities. These include home visitation programs, parenting education and family resource centers.

Parent Kit: Our Arizona Parent Kit, offered free to the parents of every Arizona newborn before they leave the hospital, is filled with simple, user-friendly resources that help parents through their most difficult questions or challenges.

Learn more at FirstThingsFirst.org/parent-kit

3 Preventive Health

Prevent and identify health problems that can impact learning later on.

Screenings: First Things First supports healthier kids by funding preventive developmental, health and sensory screenings, and then providing referrals for existing services to support children's development.

55,132

Kits containing important information, resources and tools for families of newborns were distributed to hospitals to help families support their child's health and learning.

4,077

Families with young children participated in voluntary home visiting programs proven to reduce parental stress levels, increase connections to community supports, and improve children's cognitive, motor, behavioral and socio-emotional development.

21,027

children received screenings to detect vision, hearing and developmental issues and prevent learning challenges later on.

6,775

Children received referrals to further assess for developmental delays/sensory issues and possible treatment or early intervention services.

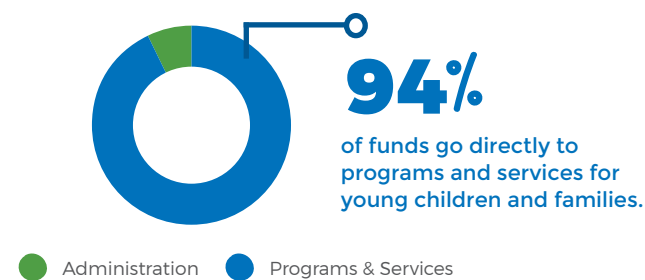
* All numbers from state fiscal year 2023

Accountability

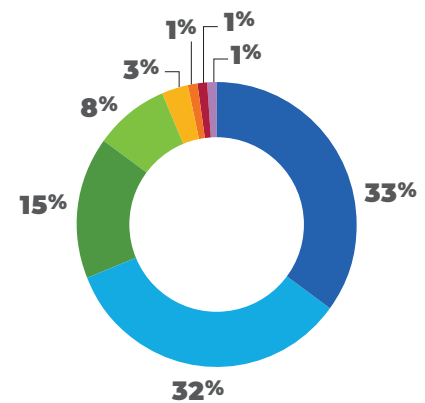
FTF monitors the impact of its programs and services:

- **Grantee Accountability** - each grantee must provide information detailing specifics about their work.
- **Programmatic Accountability** - Programs at FTF are evaluated on whether the services provided are achieving the desired result in that area.
- **Statewide Accountability** - Statewide studies determine whether the services funded by FTF collectively are resulting in children arriving at school healthier and ready to succeed.

Learn more about First Things First strategies and impact at FirstThingsFirst.org/reports.



Investments Across Arizona



Priority Funding Areas

- Other programmatic expenditures (Grants, Gifts & Donations)
- Quality Child Care & Preschool
- Strengthening Families
- Preventive Health
- Workforce Development & Training
- Research & Evaluation
- Family/Community Engagement
- System Coordination



Find FTF Programs Parents and caregivers can find resources in their area by visiting FirstThingsFirst.org.