

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Pima South Region

2020 Impact Report



From birth to age 5, a child's brain grows more than any other time in life.

90%

of a child's brain growth happens before kindergarten.
Early childhood matters.

First Things First partners with families and communities to help our state's youngest children prepare for kindergarten and beyond.

Many young children in Arizona face challenges that threaten their healthy development and learning. In the FTF Pima South Region, there are **25,171 children** (under age 6) with **28% living in poverty**.

Here is how FTF is working to support young children and their families in this region.

“As a school superintendent, I know firsthand why early childhood care and education is valuable for school readiness. Early childhood care and education provides a child with the ability to enhance his or her skills in all areas of development such as social, emotional, cognitive and physical skills. These skills are essential for building kindergarten readiness skills and to be a lifelong learner.”



David Dumon

Superintendent of Altar Valley Elementary School District

FTF Pima South Regional Key Impact Highlights [Fiscal Year 2020]



Strengthening Families and Early Literacy

660

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 social-emotional development.



Preventive Health

676

Children received fluoride varnishes applied to protect against childhood tooth decay.

577

Children monitored to receive appropriate screenings to detect vision, hearing and developmental issues to prevent learning challenges later on.



Quality Preschool and Child Care

2,887

Children attended preschools and child care programs participating in Quality First.

279

Children birth to age 5 received a Quality First scholarship to attend high-quality preschools and child care programs.

177

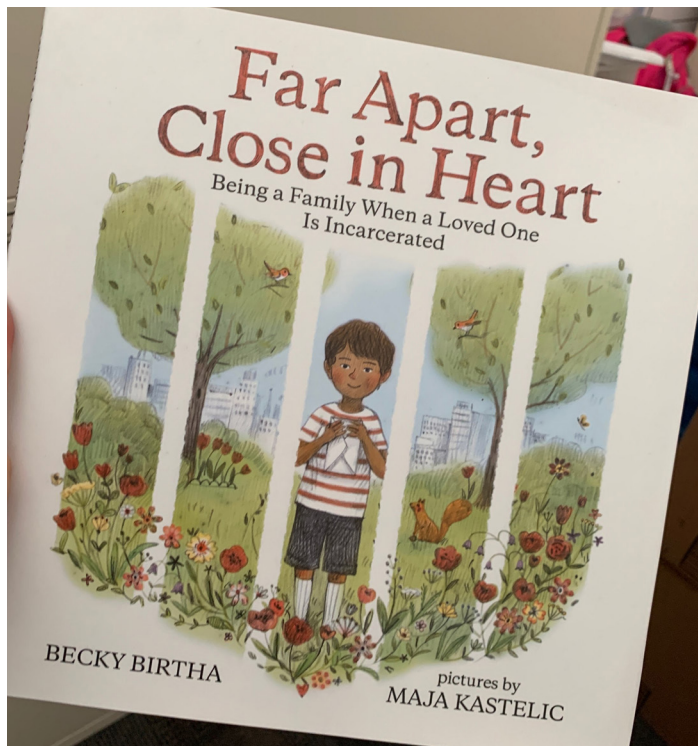
Early childhood educators attended a training or session to improve their skills in working with infants, toddlers and preschoolers.

Additional Strategies

3,058

Books

were given to families with children ages birth to age 5 to encourage parent-child interaction and reading.



Parenting class at state prison complex in Tucson helps create positive learning environment for young kids

A parenting education program funded by the First Things First Pima South Region is working with incarcerated parents to help them create positive learning environments for their children.

The University of Arizona Pima County Cooperative Extension runs the Family Engagement Program at the Arizona State Prison Complex – Tucson, where three parenting classes are offered weekly. The Family Engagement Program ensures that information and material shared with incarcerated parents are also reinforced at home with the child's parent or guardian.

The Brain Waves class focuses on helping incarcerated parents understand how their child's brain develops and how they can contribute to the development.

The Triple P Child Behavior Management class gives parents the tools to manage everyday behavior problems with their children. They learn how to set realistic expectations, communicate clearly and respectfully to their children and identify how to manage behavior problems in a way that strengthens their relationship with their child.

And the Triple P Pathways class is designed to help parents avoid escalation traps or power struggles that lead to tension with their children.

"Ultimately, when parents better understand the needs of their children, they communicate with their children in a way that improves their relationship and elicits better behavior," said Cassie Burrue, a University of Arizona instructional specialist who facilitates the Triple P parenting model.

As an incentive for finishing the classes, a book, "Far Apart, Close in Heart: Being a Family when a Loved One is Incarcerated" is mailed to the child's home.

"A personal note from the incarcerated parent is inserted into the book that we then send," Burrue said.

She said she has noticed significant improvements in participants' morale after the parent hears the child has received the book, she said.

"Parents show up to the classes week after week," she said.

Not only do the books contribute to the child's literacy but also represent the gesture of receiving a gift as a result of their parent's learning in prison, which is likely to impact the quality of their relationship.

"Parents tell us these classes help them recognize the impact they have on their child's brain development." - Cassie Burrue, University of Arizona instructional specialist

Burrue shared one story that reinforced the importance of the program and its conscious strategies to improve communication between inmate parents and their children.

"One father continuously came to the parenting class," Burrue said. "He wrote a personal note in his book to his son, Angel, who is 4 years old. During scheduled phone calls with Angel's mother, the father made time to read the book with Angel over the phone. He would consistently do it as much as he could." The child's mother later told Burrue that the book meant a great deal to the boy.

"She told me, 'The transition has been difficult and I have dealt with challenging behavior. Since this parenting program, I have seen a change. He wants to read the book every night. It is like a routine that I do not see stopping anytime soon,'" Burrue said.

Ultimately, the goal is to help the children be ready for kindergarten.

One inmate wrote in their review of the class, "I am going to communicate more with my children, read more stories and let them play outside more so they can learn and have fun."

"Parents tell us these classes help them recognize the impact they have on their child's brain development," Burrue said.

 Read more FTF stories at
[FirstThingsFirst.org/Region-Stories](https://www.FirstThingsFirst.org/Region-Stories)

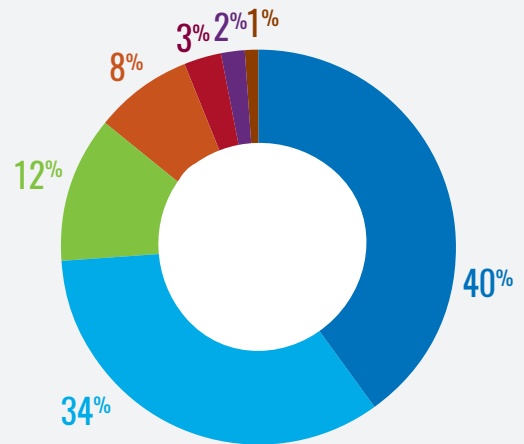
FTF Pima South Regional Partnership Council

The FTF Pima South Regional Partnership Council is made up of volunteers who study the unique needs of the local community and decide how funds should be used to best support the healthy development and early learning

of young children birth to age 5. FTF invests in proven programs and innovative strategies through grants to community organizations that provide services to children and families.

FTF Pima South FY20 Total Regional Program Expenditures

Quality Child Care and Preschool	\$2,541,740
Strengthening Families	\$2,107,082
Preventive Health	\$728,406
Workforce Development and Training	\$518,474
Research and Evaluation	\$180,002
Coordinating Care	\$148,257
Parent and Community Awareness	\$116,726
Total	\$6,340,686



FTF Pima South Regional Partnership Council and Staff

Chair
David Dumon

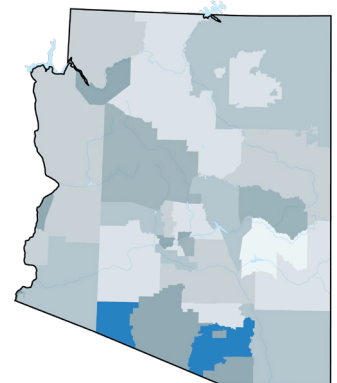
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The FTF Pima South Region is defined as the southern portion of Pima County, not including the lands belonging to the Pascua Yaqui Tribe and the Tohono O'odham Nation, plus a small part of Santa Cruz County around the Amado community. The FTF Pima South Region includes Legislative Districts 2, 3, 4 and 14. (Legislative districts are not necessarily congruent with regional boundaries.)

Learn more at
[FirstThingsFirst.org/Regions/Pima-South](https://www.firstthingsfirst.org/Regions/Pima-South)