

FIRST THINGS FIRST

2019 IMPACT REPORT

East Maricopa Region



Early experiences build the foundation for a lifetime

90%

of a child's brain growth happens before kindergarten

From birth to age 5, a child's brain develops more than any other time in life. Research shows that the quality of a child's early life experiences shape how their brain develops.

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

“Foundations are important, whether you are building a house or building a life. When children are surrounded by adults who value them ‘being little,’ provide what they need to be healthy, and nurture their development in age-appropriate ways, they are on their way to having a strong foundation for success in school and in life.”

Cheryl Foster

Chair, FTF East Maricopa Regional Partnership Council

Fiscal Year 2019 East Maricopa Region Impact Highlights

Here are a few highlights of the proven programs and innovative strategies from this region.



Strengthening Families and Early Literacy

5,302

Families or caregivers served by receiving referrals or by participating in activities at family resource centers.

212

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.



Quality Preschool and Child Care

8,042

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

540

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



Preventive Health

468

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

2,133

Children received a screening to detect tooth decay, which left undetected and treated could cause damage to permanent teeth, impaired speech development and failure to thrive.

Additional strategies:



839 children

received coordinated care at visits to their medical clinic to meet their social and health needs.



6,216 families of newborns

received the Arizona Parent Kit, filled with tips and tools to help support their child's healthy development.



Scottsdale Family Resource Center helps young sisters establish healthy emotional behaviors

Chris Ortiz and his wife Katherine decided early on that it would be beneficial for their two daughters to have a stay-at-home parent, because they know the early years are important. Ortiz chose to take that important role as a stay-at-home dad, and sought to find opportunities to be the best parent he could be.

“Every parent struggles and it is not an easy job,” Ortiz said. “There is no true handbook for parenting. My girls Sedona (age 5) and River (age 2) are each unique, with different strengths and temperaments. Because I understand that I have a responsibility to guide my daughters to be successful, kind people, I made it a mission to learn how to parent in effective ways.”

When his daughters were demonstrating some behavioral challenges typical in young kids, such as refusing to get ready in the morning, Ortiz first searched the internet on parenting topics of how to handle the emotional outbursts, but soon found himself overwhelmed with information overload and confused with which methods to trust.

“It wasn’t until attending classes at the Scottsdale Family Resource Center that I was able to learn why attachment and bonding are fundamental to the emotional health and wellbeing of a child into adulthood,” Ortiz said.

First Things First funds the Scottsdale Family Resource Center, which offers guidance and support for families with young children. The center provides access to resources, referrals to support services and access to educational programs to ensure healthy growth and development for Scottsdale’s youngest learners and their families. Ortiz took part in various programs and workshops such as, Attachment and Bonding, Positive Discipline and Guidance and Books Can.

“The resources from these programs have been reliable and credible,” Ortiz said. “The lessons reinforce the importance of emotional health with meaningful activities that my wife and I can use at home with our children.”

For example, Ortiz and his wife established a routine system with rewards that have since helped their oldest daughter to feel loved, supported and foster independence.

Today, both girls display healthy interactions with their family and peers. River, 2, communicates well and can identify some colors, letters and shapes. Sedona, 5, tested above developmental level, which allowed her to enter kindergarten early. She is now a thriving first grader with a love for reading.

“These programs have made a difference for our family,” Ortiz said. “I genuinely feel that I have become a more capable and confident parent. How we communicate at home and talk about our feelings is a direct result of these programs. Although hard to quantify and not always consistent, I feel our ability to deal with conflicts and emotional outbursts has improved immensely.”



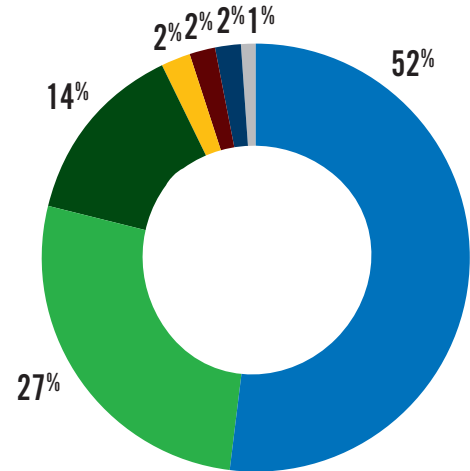
Read more FTF stories at FirstThingsFirst.org/region-stories/

East Maricopa Regional Council

The FTF East Maricopa Regional Partnership Council is made up of volunteers who study the unique needs of the local community and decide how funds will be used to best support the development, education and health 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.

FY19 Total Regional Program Expenditures

● Quality Child Care and Preschool	\$4,306,260
● Strengthening Families	\$2,239,942
● Preventive Health	\$1,161,497
● Research and Evaluation	\$218,032
● Parent and Community Awareness	\$184,158
● Workforce Development and Training	\$93,128
● Coordinating Care	\$54,935
TOTAL	\$8,257,952



FTF East Maricopa Regional Partnership Council

Chair
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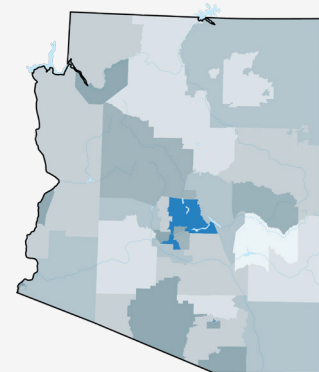
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Learn more at:
[FirstThingsFirst.org/Regions/East-Maricopa](https://www.firstthingsfirst.org/Regions/East-Maricopa)

The East Maricopa Region lies entirely within Maricopa County and spans urban communities to the east of Phoenix as well as less densely populated, suburban and rural communities reaching towards the edges of the Maricopa County boundary. This diverse, expansive region includes: three cities – Chandler, Scottsdale and Tempe; five towns – Carefree, Cave Creek, Fountain Hills, Guadalupe and Paradise Valley; three unincorporated places – Goldfield Ranch, Rio Verde and Sun Lakes; two Phoenix neighborhoods – Ahwatukee and Paradise Valley Village; and one Indian reservation – the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation. The East Maricopa Region includes Legislative Districts 1, 15, 17, 18, 24, 26 and 28. (Legislative districts are not necessarily congruent with regional boundaries.)