



**2016**

**NEEDS AND ASSETS REPORT**



**FIRST THINGS FIRST**

Southwest Maricopa



# Southwest Maricopa Regional Partnership Council

2016

## Needs and Assets Report

Prepared by

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The University of Arizona

Funded by

First Things First Southwest Maricopa Regional Partnership Council

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## LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

February 10, 2017

Message from the Chair:

The past two years have been rewarding for the First Things First Southwest Maricopa Regional Partnership Council, as we delivered on our mission to build better futures for young children and their families. During the past year, we have touched many lives of young children and their families.

The First Things First Southwest Maricopa Regional Partnership Council will continue to advocate and provide opportunities as indicated throughout this report.

Our strategic direction has been guided by the Needs and Assets reports, specifically created for the Southwest Maricopa Region in 2014 and the new 2016 report. The Needs and Assets reports are vital to our continued work in building a true integrated early childhood system for our young children and our overall future. The Southwest Maricopa Regional Council would like to thank our Needs and Assets vendors, University of Arizona, Norton School of Family and Consumer Sciences, for their knowledge, expertise and analysis of the Southwest Maricopa region. The new report will help guide our decisions as we move forward for young children and their families within the Southwest Maricopa region.

Going forward, the First Things First Southwest Maricopa Regional Partnership Council is committed to meeting the needs of young children by providing essential services and advocating for social change.

Thanks to our dedicated staff, volunteers and community partners, First Things First is making a real difference in the lives of our youngest citizens and throughout the entire State.

Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,



Kimberly Flack, Chair

## **Introductory Summary and Acknowledgments**

Ninety percent of a child’s brain develops before kindergarten and the quality of a child’s early experiences impact whether their brain will develop in positive ways that promote learning. 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 Southwest Maricopa Region helps us in understanding the needs of young children, the resources available to meet those needs and gaps that may exist in those resources. An overview of this information is provided in the Executive Summary and documented in further detail in the full report.

The First Things First Southwest Maricopa 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. This report provides information that will aid the Council’s funding decisions, as well as our work with community partners on building a comprehensive early childhood system that best meets the needs of young children in our community.

It is our sincere hope that this information will help guide community conversations about how we can best support school readiness for all children in the Southwest Maricopa region. This information may also be useful to stakeholders in our 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 in our area.

### ***Acknowledgments:***

We want to thank the Arizona Department of Economic Security and the Arizona Child Care Resource and Referral, the Arizona Department of Health Services, the Arizona Department of Education, the Census Bureau, the Arizona Department of Administration- Employment and Population Statistics, and the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System for their contributions of data for this report, and their ongoing support and partnership with First Things First on behalf of young children.

To the current and past members of the Southwest Maricopa Regional Partnership Council, your vision, dedication, and passion have been instrumental in improving outcomes for young children and families within the region. Our current 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.

## Table of Contents

Letter from the Chair .....	i
List of Tables .....	3
List of Figures .....	4
Executive Summary.....	6
The Southwest Maricopa Region.....	11
Regional Description .....	11
Data Sources .....	13
Population Characteristics .....	15
Why it Matters .....	15
What the Data Tell Us .....	16
Population and Households .....	17
Living Arrangements for Young Children .....	19
Race, Ethnicity, and Language .....	21
Economic Circumstances .....	23
Why it Matters .....	23
What the Data Tell Us .....	25
Poverty and Income .....	26
Employment and Housing.....	27
Economic Supports .....	29
Educational Indicators .....	30
Why it Matters .....	30
What the Data Tell Us .....	31
Educational Attainment of the Adult Population .....	32
Graduation and Drop-out Rates .....	32
Third-grade Test Scores .....	33
Other Educational Indicators .....	34
Early Learning.....	35
Why it Matters .....	35
What the Data Tell Us .....	36
Early Care and Education .....	37
Families with Children Who Have Special Needs .....	39
Child Health.....	40
Why it Matters .....	40
What the Data Tell Us .....	41
Mothers Giving Birth.....	43
Infant Health .....	44
Health Insurance .....	46
Immunizations .....	47
Family Support and Literacy .....	48
Why it Matters .....	48
What the Data Tell Us .....	49

Communication, Public Information and Awareness .....	52
Why it Matters .....	52
What the Data Tell Us .....	52
Systems Coordination among Early Childhood Programs and Services .....	54
Why it Matters .....	54
What the Data Tell Us .....	54
Appendix 1: Map of zip codes of the Southwest Maricopa Region.....	57
Appendix 2: Zip codes of the Southwest Maricopa Region .....	58
Appendix 3: Map of Elementary and Unified School Districts in the Southwest Maricopa Region .....	59
Appendix 4: Data Sources .....	60

### List of Tables

Table 1. Population and households, 2010.....	17
Table 2. Population of children by single year-of-age, 2010 .....	18
Table 3. State and county population projections, 2015 & 2020 .....	18
Table 4. Children (ages 0-5) living with one or two foreign-born parents, 2009-2013 five-year estimate .....	20
Table 5. Children (ages 0-5) living in the household of a grandparent, 2010 .....	20
Table 6. Grandparents responsible for grandchildren (ages 0-17) living with them, 2009-2013 five-year estimate .....	20
Table 7. Race and ethnicity of the population of young children (ages 0-4), 2010.....	21
Table 8. Race and ethnicity of the adult population (ages 18 and older), 2010 .....	21
Table 9. Household use of languages other than English, 2009-2013 five-year estimate .....	22
Table 10. Federal poverty levels for families with young children (ages 0-4), 2009-2013 five-year estimate .....	26
Table 11. Parents of young children (ages 0-5) who are or are not in the labor force, 2009-2013 five-year estimate .....	28
Table 12. Vacant and occupied housing units, 2009-2013 five-year estimate.....	28
Table 13. Occupied housing units, costs relative to income, and foreclosures, 2009-2013 five-year estimate .....	28
Table 14. Children (ages 0-5) receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), 2012-2014 .....	29
Table 15. Children (ages 0-5) in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), 2012-2014 .....	29
Table 16. Students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, 2012-2014.....	29
Table 17. Drop-out and graduation rates, 2012-2014.....	32
Table 18. Percent of students (Pre-K through 3rd grade) who were homeless, 2012-2014.....	34
Table 19. Attendance rates for first-, second-, and third-graders, 2014.....	34

Table 20. Child care providers, number of providers and total licensed capacity, 2014 ..... 37

Table 21. Median daily charge for full-time child care, 2014 ..... 38

Table 22. Cost of child care in a licensed center as a percentage of median family income ..... 38

Table 23. Estimated number of children (ages 3 or 4) enrolled in nursery school, preschool, or kindergarten, 2009-2013 five-year estimate ..... 38

Table 24. AzEIP referrals and children served, 2014 ..... 39

Table 25. Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) services to children (ages 0-2), 2013-2014 ..... 39

Table 26. Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) services to children (ages 3-5), 2013-2014 ..... 39

Table 27. Selected characteristics of mothers giving birth, 2013..... 43

Table 28. Selected characteristics of babies born, 2013 ..... 44

Table 29. Unintentional injuries to children (ages 0-5), 2012-2014 ..... 45

Table 30. Number of children (all ages) enrolled in KidsCare, 2005-2014 ..... 46

Table 31. Immunizations for children in child care, school year 2014-2015 ..... 47

Table 32. Immunizations for children in kindergarten, school year 2014-2015..... 47

**List of Figures**

Figure 1. The Southwest Maricopa Region ..... 12

Figure 2. Living arrangements for children (ages 0-5), 2009-2013 five-year estimate ..... 19

Figure 3. Heads of households in which young children (ages 0-5) live, 2010..... 19

Figure 4. Language spoken at home, by persons ages 5 and older, 2009-2013 five-year estimate ..... 22

Figure 5. Percent of population in poverty, 2009-2013 five-year estimate ..... 26

Figure 6. Median annual family incomes, 2009-2013 five-year estimate ..... 27

Figure 7. Average annual unemployment rates, 2006-2014 ..... 27

Figure 8. Level of education for the population ages 25 and older, 2009-2013 five-year estimate ..... 32

Figure 9. Results of the 2014 third-grade AIMS Math test..... 33

Figure 10. Results of the 2014 third-grade AIMS Reading test ..... 33

Figure 11. Healthy People 2020 objectives for mothers, compared to 2013 region and state data ..... 43

Figure 12. Healthy People 2020 objectives for babies, compared to 2013 region and state data ..... 44

Figure 13. Regular visits at the same doctor's office (Family and Community Survey, 2012) .... 45

Figure 14. Regular visits with the same dental provider (Family and Community Survey, 2012)45

Figure 15. Estimated percent of population without health insurance, 2009-2013 five-year estimate ..... 46

Figure 16. Reading stories to young children (Family and Community Survey, 2012)..... 49

Figure 17. Telling stories or singing songs to young children (Family and Community Survey, 2012) ..... 50

Figure 18. Drawing and scribbling with young children (Family and Community Survey, 2012) 50

Figure 19. Understanding of prenatal brain development (Family and Community Survey, 2012) ..... 51

Figure 20. Satisfaction with information and resources (Family and Community Survey, 2012)53

Figure 21. Ease of locating needed services (Family and Community Survey, 2012)..... 53

Figure 22. Satisfaction with coordination and communication (Family and Community Survey, 2012) ..... 56



## Executive Summary

### ***Regional Description***

The First Things First Southwest Maricopa Region covers the southwestern section of Maricopa County. It includes the cities of Avondale, Goodyear, Tolleson, and Litchfield Park, along with the towns of Buckeye and Gila Bend. It also includes the unincorporated communities of Arlington, Theba, Wintersburg, and Tonopah. The Waddell community is split between the Southwest Maricopa and Northwest Maricopa regions. A small part of the city of Phoenix (south of Tolleson, along Lower Buckeye Road) is included in the Southwest Maricopa Region.

### ***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 publically available sources, including the 2010 U.S. Census, the American Community Survey (ACS), the Arizona Department of Administration (ADOA), and the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS). In addition, regional data from the 2012 First Things First Family and Community Survey (FCS) are included.

### ***Population Characteristics***

According to the U.S. Census, the Southwest Maricopa Region had a population of 273,194 in 2010, of whom 28,512 (10%) were children under the age of six. Twenty-four percent of households in the region included a young child. According to the Arizona Department of Administration, the population of young children in Maricopa County was expected to decrease by 2015, and then begin increasing again into 2020. The overall increase from 2010 to 2020 in the young child population in the county (10%) is projected to be slightly lower than the state of Arizona's projected increase (12%).

Living arrangements of children in the Southwest Maricopa Region are similar to those in the county and the state, with small differences. A smaller proportion of young children in the region live in a single-female headed household (19%) compared to the state (24%). In the Southwest Maricopa Region, just over a quarter (26%) of children aged birth to 5 live with a foreign-born parent. Compared to the region, the county and the state have a higher percentage of young children living with a foreign-born parent (31%, 28% respectively). Family living arrangements are similar; a comparable percentage of young children live in a grandparent's household in the region (13%), county (12%), and state (14%).

However, differences do exist between the region, county, and the state relating to race, ethnicity, and language. Fifty-two percent of young children in the Southwest Maricopa Region are Hispanic or Latino. This is a higher percentage of Latino children than elsewhere in Maricopa County (46%) and in Arizona (45%) as whole. A smaller proportion of adults (those aged 18 and older) than children identify as Hispanic or Latino across all geographic levels, although the percentage of adults identifying as Hispanic or Latino in the region is higher than the county or state. In the region, thirty-seven percent of adults (those aged 18 and older)

identify as Hispanic or Latino, compared to 25 percent across both Maricopa County and the state. Household language use also reflects these demographic patterns; more households in the region (34%) report speaking a language other than English compared to Maricopa County (25%) and Arizona (27%).

### ***Economic Circumstances***

Thirteen percent of the total (all-age) population of the Southwest Maricopa Region lives in poverty, which is lower than in Maricopa County (17% in poverty) or the state (18%). The percentage of the population aged 0-5 in poverty in the Southwest Maricopa Region (19%) is higher than the total (all-age) population in the region in poverty (13%), but lower than the population of children aged 0-5 living in poverty across the county (26%) or state (28%). In addition to the families whose incomes fall below the federal poverty level, a proportion of households in the region and county are considered low income (i.e., near but not below the federal poverty level [FPL]). Four out of every ten families (41%) in the region with children aged four and under live below 185 percent of the FPL (i.e., earned less than \$3,677 a month for a family of four) compared to 45 percent in the county and nearly half the families (48%) across the state.

Other indicators related to poverty in the region differ somewhat from the county and state. Unemployment rates have been dropping in both Maricopa County and the state since 2010. The percentage of residents in the Southwest Maricopa Region paying more than 30 percent of their income on housing (34%) is slightly less than those across the county (37%) or the state (36%). Conversely, the foreclosure rate in the region (10.8 per 10,000 homes) is higher than the rate in the county or across the state (7.2 per 10,000 for both).

The percentages of children aged 5 and under receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) from 2012 to 2014 were low for the region, county, and the state, and across years, receipt of this benefit has been slightly lower in the Southwest Maricopa Region than elsewhere. Other safety net programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the school-based free or reduced-price lunch program, reached more children.

For both TANF and SNAP, the percentage of young children receiving this benefit has decreased between 2012 and 2014. More than half (54%) of students in Maricopa County were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch between 2012 and 2014. At the same time, the percent across the state remained at 57 or 58 percent.

### **Educational Indicators**

Adults aged 25 and older in the Southwest Maricopa Region are less likely to have a bachelor's degree or more (21%) than adults across the county (30%) or Arizona (27%). However, same-age adults in the region are slightly more likely to have had some college or professional training than those across the county or state. High school drop-out rates were similar in Maricopa County and in the state of Arizona (both 3% in FY2014). In addition, four and five year graduation rates in 2013 in Maricopa County (77% and 80% respectively) were slightly

higher than in the state (75% and 79%), although they had decreased from highs in the region during 2011 of 80 and 83 percent respectively.

Child academic achievement in the county is very similar to the state. Students are considered to “pass” Arizona’s Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) if they meet or exceed the standard. AIMS 3rd grade Reading and Math results were similar for Maricopa County and the state of Arizona in 2014. Only three percent of 3rd graders in the county and state scored “falls far below” in reading; whereas in math, nine percent of 3rd graders in Maricopa County and 10 percent in Arizona also received this score.

### ***Early Learning***

In 2014, there were 120 licensed child care providers in the Southwest Maricopa Region, licensed to serve 10,455 children. Most of these providers were classified as child care centers (n=82), followed by family child care providers (n=21) and group homes (n=12). The cost of care in Maricopa County varies by the type of care and the age of the child receiving care; the median cost in the county relative to the cost of like care across the state differs depending on the situation. For example, residents in Maricopa County tend to pay higher prices for child care centers (e.g., \$35 per day for 3-5 year olds compared to \$33 elsewhere in the state) but lower prices for approved family homes (e.g., \$16 per day for 3-5 year olds compared to \$20 elsewhere in the state).

According to data from the American Community Survey, a lower proportion of children aged 3 and 4 were enrolled in nursery school, preschool, or kindergarten in the Southwest Maricopa Region (22%) compared to Maricopa County and the state of Arizona (35% for both).

In the Southwest Maricopa Region, Maricopa County, and across Arizona, most referrals made to the Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP) in FY 2014 were for children aged 25 to 35 months (n=282 for the region). The pattern of children being served by AzEIP in October of 2014 was similar for the region, county, and the state with more 25 to 35 month olds being served than 13 to 24 month olds and those under 1 year combined. The number of Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) service visits for children aged 0-2 decreased from 2013 to 2014 in the region, county, and state. Service visits for children ages 3-5 also decreased in the county and state; however, in the region, DDD service visits for children aged 3-5 increased slightly.

### ***Child Health***

Mothers who gave birth in 2013 in the Southwest Maricopa Region exhibited healthier behaviors than mothers in Maricopa County and cross the state of Arizona. For example, three percent of women giving birth in the Southwest Maricopa Region had fewer than five prenatal visits, compared to four percent in Maricopa County and five percent across the state overall. A lower proportion of mothers in the Southwest Maricopa Region reported smoking (3%) than in the county (4%) or state (4%). The region is also doing well in terms of meeting the Healthy People 2020 objective related to the proportion of expectant mothers who receive prenatal care in the first trimester; at 14 percent, the region falls below the Healthy People 2020 guideline of no more than 22.1 percent of mothers lacking prenatal care. However, for the

proportion of women who smoke while pregnant objective, the region falls just above the Healthy People 2020 goal of 1.4 percent.

The Southwest Maricopa Region is meeting additional Healthy People 2020 objectives for infant and child health. Healthy People 2020 objectives include that fewer than 7.8 percent of babies are born at low birth weights and fewer than 11.4 percent are born preterm. In the region in 2013, seven percent of babies were low birth weight and 10 percent were premature.

Regarding both non-fatal hospitalizations and emergency department visits, unintentional injuries for children under age six declined between 2012 and 2014 in both the county and state.

A key factor in health care is health insurance, and young children in the Southwest Maricopa Region were as likely to be uninsured as young children in the county and state (10% for all). Compared to young children, members of the total (all ages) population of the region, county, and state were more likely to lack health insurance. Additionally, more of the total population in the Southwest Maricopa Region was uninsured (18%) than in Maricopa County (17%) or the state (17%).

While immunization rates vary by vaccine, over 90 percent of children in child care in the Southwest Maricopa Region had completed each of the three major (DTAP, polio, and MMR) vaccine series; these rates were similar to those of the county and state. The Healthy People 2020 target for vaccination coverage for children ages 19-35 months for these vaccines is 90 percent, suggesting the region is meeting this goal. However, given that state regulations require children enrolled in child care to be up to date on immunizations, it is possible that the rates of immunization for children in child care are higher than immunization rates for children not in child care. If that is the case, the rates for the entire population of children in these areas may be lower than the Healthy People 2020 goal. Children in kindergarten were vaccinated at similar rates compared to children in child care for the region, and the region's rates of vaccine coverage for kindergarteners were similar to those at the county and state level. The Southwest Maricopa Region had slightly lower rates of religious and personal belief exemptions from immunizations than the county or the state.

### ***Family Support and Literacy***

The First Things First Family and Community Survey is a phone-based survey designed to measure many critical areas of parents' knowledge, skills, and behaviors related to their young children. In the Southwest Maricopa Region, 150 people responded to the 2012 First Things First Family and Community Survey. Among other topics, the 2012 survey collected data about parent and caregiver knowledge of children's early development and their involvement in a variety of behaviors known to contribute positively to healthy development. Parents in the Southwest Maricopa Region were less likely to report reading to their children (44%) and telling stories to their children (46%), but as likely to report drawing with their child (47%) six or seven days a week compared to parents across the state (51%, 51% and 47% respectively). Parents in the Southwest Maricopa Region also showed a lower level of understanding that brain development can be impacted prenatally or right from birth (70%) than did respondents across the state as a whole (80%).



### ***Communication, Public Information and Awareness***

In addition to measuring parent knowledge, skills, and behaviors related to their young children, the 2012 First Things First Family and Community Survey collected data on parents' perceptions regarding resources available to young children and their families across Arizona. Results from the survey demonstrated that residents in the Southwest Maricopa Region had similar levels of satisfaction with available information and resources, and agreement with ease of locating services, compared to the state. Forty percent of Southwest Maricopa Region respondents indicated they were "very satisfied" with "the community information and resources available to them about their children's development and health," compared to 39 percent of respondents across the state. Seventy-seven percent of Southwest Maricopa Region respondents "strongly agreed" or "somewhat agreed" that "it is easy to locate services that I want or need," compared to 74 percent of respondents across the state.

### ***Systems Coordination among Early Childhood Programs and Services***

The 2012 First Things First Family and Community Survey collected data on parents' perceptions regarding how well agencies that serve young children and their families coordinate and collaborate. One item from the survey addresses the issue of perceived early childhood system coordination. Respondents in both the region and the state were more likely to indicate satisfaction (46% in the region, 43% in the state) than dissatisfaction (16% in the region, 29% in the state) with how care providers and government agencies work together and communicate. A large percentage of respondents in the region also indicated they were "not sure" (38%) how satisfied they were with providers and agencies' cooperation and communication.

## The Southwest Maricopa Region

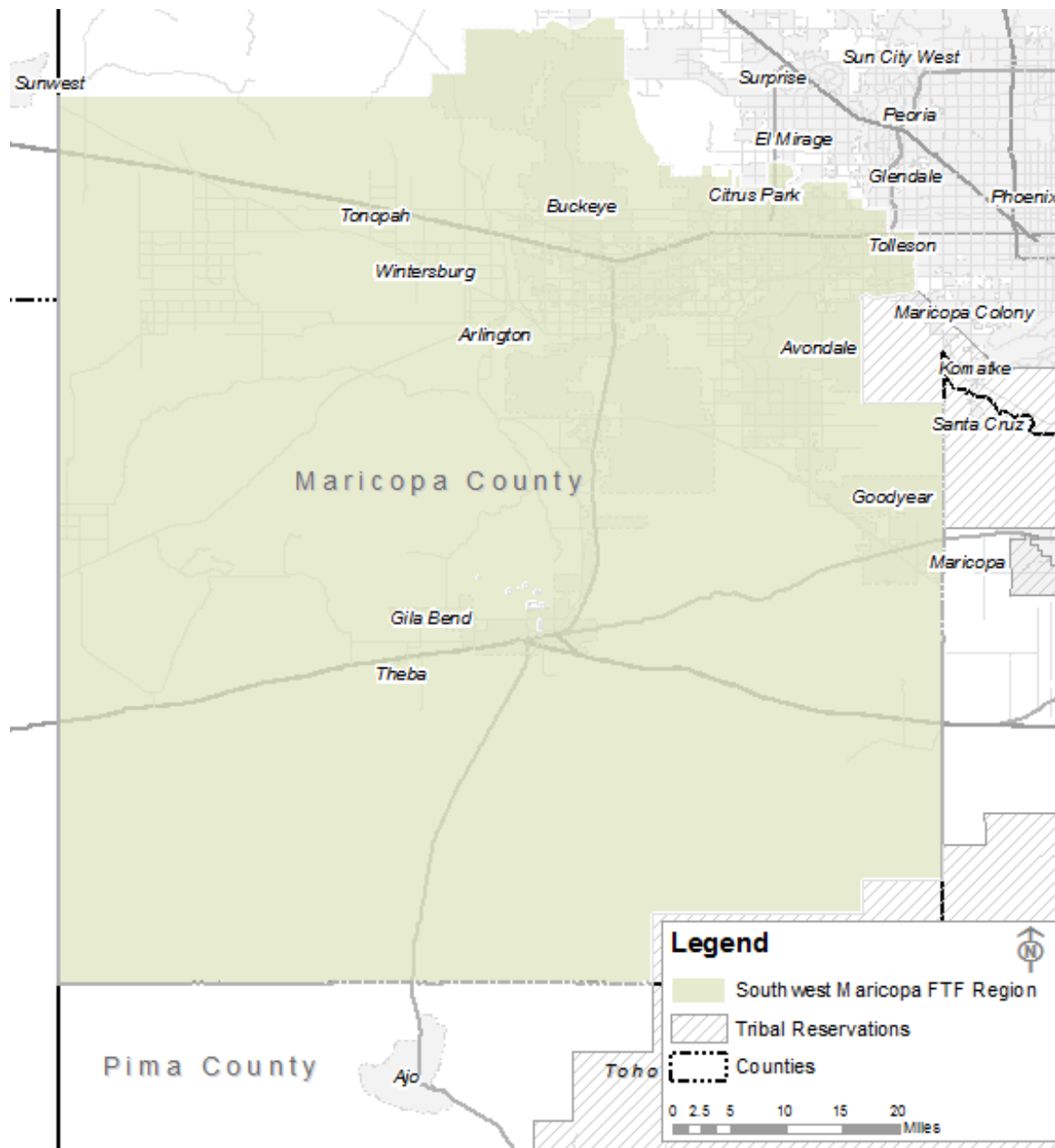
### Regional Description

The First Things First regional boundaries were initially established in 2007, creating 31 regions which were designed to (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, and facilitate the ability to convene a Regional Partnership Council, and (d) allow for the collection of demographic and indicator data. The regional boundaries are reviewed every two years. In fiscal year 2015, the boundaries were modified using census blocks, creating 28 regions. This report uses the 2015 definition of the regional boundaries.

The First Things First Southwest Maricopa Region covers the southwestern section of Maricopa County. It includes the cities of Avondale, Goodyear, Tolleson, and Litchfield Park, along with the towns of Buckeye and Gila Bend. It also includes the unincorporated communities of Arlington, Theba, Wintersburg, and Tonopah. The Waddell community is split between the Southwest Maricopa and Northwest Maricopa regions. A small part of the city of Phoenix (south of Tolleson, along Lower Buckeye Road) is included in the Southwest Maricopa Region.

Figure 1 below shows the geographical area covered by the Southwest Maricopa 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 Southwest Maricopa Region**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2010). TIGER/Line Shapefiles: TabBlocks, Streets, Counties, American Indian/Alaska Native Homelands. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/geo/maps-data/data/tiger-line.html>

## 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 publically available sources, including the 2010 U.S. Census, the American Community Survey (ACS), the Arizona Department of Administration (ADOA), and the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS). In addition, regional data from the 2012 First Things First Family and Community Survey (FCS) are included.

The U.S. Census<sup>1</sup> 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. The Census data for the Southwest Maricopa Region presented in this report were calculated by identifying each block in the region, and aggregating the data over all of those blocks. (Note that the Census 2010 data in the current report may vary to a small degree from census data reported in previous Needs & Assets reports. The reason is that in the previous reports, the Census 2010 data were aggregated by zip code; the current report uses aggregation by census blocks.)

The American Community Survey<sup>2</sup> 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 for the Southwest Maricopa Region were calculated by aggregating over the census tracts which are wholly or partially contained in the region. The data from partial census tracts were apportioned according to the percentage of the 2010 Census population in that tract living inside the Southwest Maricopa Region. 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 2009 to 2013. In general, the reliability of ACS estimates is greater for more populated areas. Statewide estimates, for example, are more reliable than county-level estimates.

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

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. (May, 2000). *Factfinder for the Nation*. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/history/pdf/cff4.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Census Bureau (April, 2013). *American Community Survey Information Guide*. Retrieved from [http://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/programs-surveys/acs/about/ACS\\_Information\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/programs-surveys/acs/about/ACS_Information_Guide.pdf)



health or developmental delay if the count is less than twenty-five. In addition, some data received from state agencies may be suppressed according to their own guidelines. The Arizona Department of Health Services, for example, does not report counts less than six. Throughout this report, information which is not available because of suppression guidelines will be indicated by entries of “N/A” in the data tables.

## Population Characteristics

### Why it Matters

The characteristics of families living within a region can influence the availability of resources and supports for those families.<sup>3</sup> Population characteristics and trends in family composition are often considered by policymakers when making decisions about the type and location of services to be provided within a region such as schools, health care facilities and services, and social services and programs. As a result of these decisions, families with young children may have very different experiences within and across regions regarding access to employment, food resources, schools, health care facilities and providers, and social services. It is important, therefore, that decision-makers understand who their constituents are so that they can prioritize policies that address the needs of diverse families with young children. Accurate and up-to-date information about population characteristics such as the number of children and families in a geographic region, their ethnic composition, whether their parents were born abroad, living arrangements and languages spoken can support the development or continuation of resources that are linguistically, culturally, and geographically most appropriate for a given locale.

In addition to being affected by community resources, the likelihood of a child reaching his or her optimal development can also be affected by the supports and resources available within the family.<sup>4,5</sup> The availability of family resources can be influenced by the characteristics of the family structure, such as who resides in a household and who is responsible for a child's care. Children living with and being cared for by relatives or caregivers other than parents, is increasingly common.<sup>6</sup> Those providing this type of care, such as friends, aunts, uncles, siblings and grandparents, may be in need of special support. Raising or supporting young children may pose a particular challenge for aging grandparents, as they often lack information on resources, support services, benefits and policies available to aid in their caregiving role.<sup>7</sup> Often,

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<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau. (2014). *Child Health USA 2014. Population Characteristics*. Retrieved from: <http://mchb.hrsa.gov/chusa14/population-characteristics.html>

<sup>4</sup> Center for American Progress. (2015). *Valuing All Our Families. Progressive Policies that Strengthen Family Commitments and Reduce Family Disparities*. Retrieved from: <https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/FamilyStructure-report.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Kidsdata.org. (n.d.). *Summary: Family Structure*. Retrieved from: <http://www.kidsdata.org/topic/8/family-structure/summary>

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2012). *ASPE Report. Children in Nonparental Care: A Review of the Literature and Analysis of Data Gaps*. Retrieved from <http://aspe.hhs.gov/basic-report/children-nonparental-care-review-literature-and-analysis-data-gaps>

<sup>7</sup> American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. (2015). *Grandparents Raising Grandchildren*. Retrieved from [http://www.aamft.org/imis15/AAMFT/Content/Consumer\\_Updates/Grandparents\\_Raising\\_Grandchildren.aspx](http://www.aamft.org/imis15/AAMFT/Content/Consumer_Updates/Grandparents_Raising_Grandchildren.aspx)

grandparents take on child rearing responsibilities when parents are unable to provide care because of the parent's death, unemployment or underemployment, physical or mental illness, substance abuse, incarceration, or because of domestic violence or child neglect in the family.<sup>8</sup> Caring for children who have experienced family trauma can pose an even greater challenge to grandparents, who may be in need of specialized assistance and resources to support their grandchildren.

Understanding language use in the region can also contribute to being better able to serve the needs of families with young children. Language preservation and revitalization have been recognized by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services as keys to strengthening culture in Native communities and to encouraging communities to move toward social unity and self-sufficiency.<sup>9</sup> Special consideration should be given to respecting and supporting the numerous Native languages spoken by families, particularly in tribal communities around the state. In addition, assuring that early childhood resources and services are available in Spanish is important in many areas of Arizona, given that five percent of the households in the state are limited English speaking households (that is, a household where none of the members speak English very well). Language barriers for these families can limit their access to health care and social services, and can provide challenges to communication between parents and their child's teachers, which can impact the quality of education children are able to receive.<sup>10</sup>

## What the Data Tell Us

According to the U.S. Census, the Southwest Maricopa Region had a population of 273,194 in 2010, of whom 28,512 (10%) were children under the age of six (see Table 1). Twenty-four percent of households in the region included a young child. According to the Arizona Department of Administration, the population of young children in Maricopa County was expected to decrease by 2015, and then begin increasing again into 2020 (see Table 3). The overall increase from 2010 to 2020 in the young child population in the county (10%) is projected to be slightly lower than the state of Arizona's projected increase (12%).

Living arrangements of children in the Southwest Maricopa Region are similar to those in the county and the state, with small differences. A smaller proportion of young children in the region live in a single-female headed household (19%) compared to young children across

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<sup>8</sup> Population Reference Bureau. (2012). *More U.S. Children Raised by Grandparents*. Retrieved from <http://www.prb.org/Publications/Articles/2012/US-children-grandparents.aspx>

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Native Americans. (n.d.). *Native Languages*. Retrieved from <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ana/programs/native-language-preservation-maintenance>

<sup>10</sup> Shields, M. & Behrman, R. (2004). Children of immigrant families: Analysis and recommendations. *The Future of Children*, 14(2). Retrieved from: [https://www.princeton.edu/futureofchildren/publications/docs/14\\_02\\_1.pdf](https://www.princeton.edu/futureofchildren/publications/docs/14_02_1.pdf)

Arizona (24%) (see Figure 3). In the Southwest Maricopa Region, just over a quarter (26%) of children aged birth to 5 live with a foreign-born parent. Compared to the region, the county has a higher percentage of young children living with a foreign-born parent (31%), as does the state (28%) (see Table 4). Family living arrangements are similar by geography; a comparable percentage of young children live in a grandparent's household in the region (13%), county (12%), and the state (14%) (see Table 5).

Differences do exist between the region, county, and the state relating to race, ethnicity, and language. Fifty-two percent of young children in the Southwest Maricopa Region are Hispanic or Latino. This is a higher percentage of Latino children than elsewhere in Maricopa County (46%) and in the state of Arizona (45%) (see Table 7). A smaller proportion of adults (those aged 18 and older) than children identify as Hispanic or Latino across all geographic levels, although the percentage of adults identifying as Hispanic or Latino in the region is higher than the county or state. In the region, thirty-seven percent of adults (those aged 18 and older) identify as Hispanic or Latino, compared to 25 percent across both Maricopa County and the state (see Table 8). Household language use also reflects these demographic patterns; more households in the region (34%) report speaking a language other than English compared to Maricopa County (25%) and Arizona (27%) (see Table 9).

## Population and Households

**Table 1. Population and households, 2010**

	TOTAL POPULATION	POPULATION (AGES 0-5)	TOTAL NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS	HOUSEHOLDS WITH ONE OR MORE CHILDREN (AGES 0-5)	
Southwest Maricopa Region	273,194	28,512	83,781	20,142	24%
Maricopa County	3,817,117	339,217	1,411,583	238,955	17%
Arizona	6,392,017	546,609	2,380,990	384,441	16%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2010). 2010 Decennial Census, Summary File 1, Tables P1, P14, P20.  
Retrieved from: <http://factfinder.census.gov>



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

	AGES 0-5	AGE 0	AGE 1	AGE 2	AGE 3	AGE 4	AGE 5
Southwest Maricopa Region	28,512	4,462	4,629	4,814	4,890	4,946	4,771
Maricopa County	339,217	54,300	55,566	57,730	58,192	56,982	56,447
Arizona	546,609	87,557	89,746	93,216	93,880	91,316	90,894

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

Retrieved from: <http://factfinder.census.gov>

Note: Children age 0 were born between April 2009 and March 2010; children age 5 were born between April 2004 and March 2005.

**Table 3. State and county population projections, 2015 & 2020**

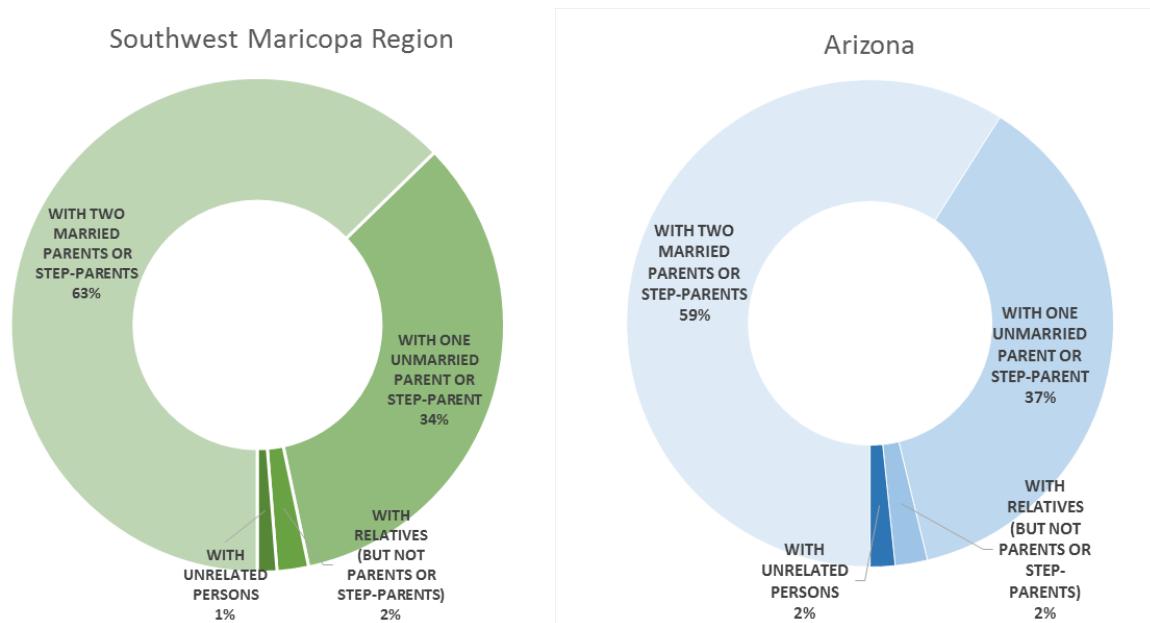
	POPULATION (AGES 0-5) IN 2010 CENSUS	PROJECTED POPULATION (AGES 0-5) IN 2015	PROJECTED POPULATION (AGES 0-5) IN 2020	PROJECTED CHANGE FROM 2010 TO 2020
Maricopa County	339,217	330,800	373,700	10%
Arizona	546,609	537,200	610,400	12%

Sources: Arizona Dept. of Administration (2015). 2012-2050 State and county population projections & U.S. Census Bureau (2010). 2010 Decennial Census, Summary File 1, Tables P1, P14. Retrieved from: <http://factfinder.census.gov>

Note: Regional data were not available for this indicator.

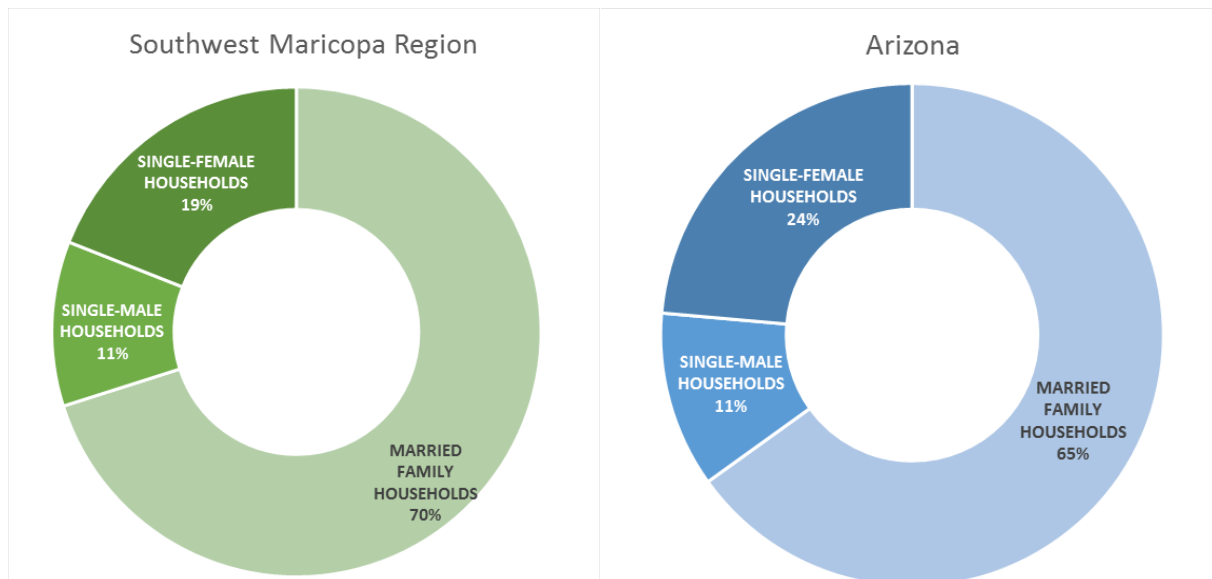
## Living Arrangements for Young Children

**Figure 2. Living arrangements for children (ages 0-5), 2009-2013 five-year estimate**



Source: American Community Survey, 5-year estimates (2009-2013), Tables B05009, B09001, B17006  
 Retrieved from: <http://factfinder.census.gov>

**Figure 3. Heads of households in which young children (ages 0-5) live, 2010**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2010). 2010 Decennial Census, Summary File 1, Tables P20, P32.  
 Retrieved from: <http://factfinder.census.gov>

**Table 4. Children (ages 0-5) living with one or two foreign-born parents, 2009-2013 five-year estimate**

CHILDREN (0-5) LIVING WITH ONE OR TWO FOREIGN-BORN PARENTS	
Southwest Maricopa Region	26%
Maricopa County	31%
Arizona	28%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2014). 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, Table B05009. Retrieved from: <http://factfinder.census.gov>

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

CHILDREN (0-5) LIVING IN A GRANDPARENT'S HOUSEHOLD	
Southwest Maricopa Region	13%
Maricopa County	12%
Arizona	14%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2010). 2010 Decennial Census, Summary File 1, Table P41 Retrieved from: <http://factfinder.census.gov>

**Table 6. Grandparents responsible for grandchildren (ages 0-17) living with them, 2009-2013 five-year estimate**

	GRANDCHILDREN (0-17) LIVING WITH GRANDPARENT HOUSEHOLDER	GRANDPARENT HOUSEHOLDER RESPONSIBLE FOR OWN GRANDCHILDREN (0-17)		GRANDPARENT HOUSEHOLDER RESPONSIBLE FOR OWN GRANDCHILDREN (0-17) WITH NO PARENT PRESENT	
Southwest Maricopa Region	6,942	3,790	55%	1,151	17%
Maricopa County	72,197	36,520	51%	9,596	13%
Arizona	137,753	73,467	53%	20,102	15%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2014). 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, Table B10002. Retrieved from: <http://factfinder.census.gov>

## Race, Ethnicity, and Language

**Table 7. Race and ethnicity of the population of young children (ages 0-4), 2010**

	TOTAL POPULATION (AGES 0-4)	HISPANIC OR LATINO	WHITE, NOT HISPANIC	BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN	AMERICAN INDIAN	ASIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER
Southwest Maricopa Region	23,741	52%	34%	7%	2%	3%
Maricopa County	282,770	46%	40%	6%	3%	4%
Arizona	455,715	45%	40%	5%	6%	3%

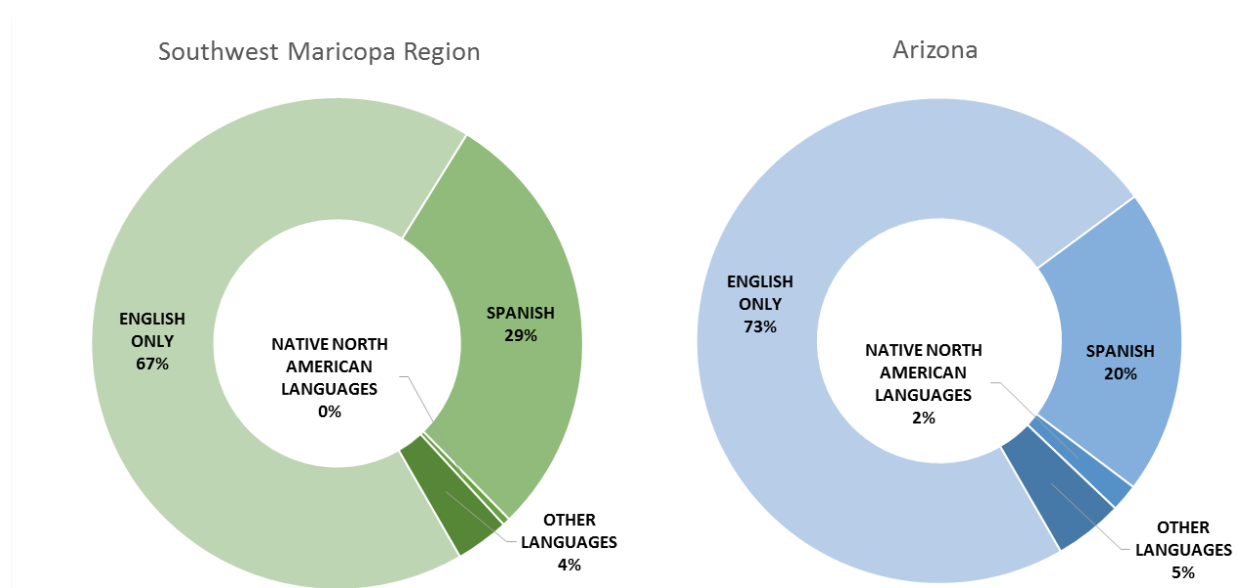
Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2010). 2010 Decennial Census, Summary File 1, Tables P12A-H.  
Retrieved from: <http://factfinder.census.gov>

**Table 8. Race and ethnicity of the adult population (ages 18 and older), 2010**

	TOTAL POPULATION (AGES 18+)	HISPANIC OR LATINO	NOT HISPANIC OR LATINO				
			WHITE	BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN	AMERICAN INDIAN	ASIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER	OTHER
Southwest Maricopa Region	188,494	37%	51%	7%	1%	3%	1%
Maricopa County	2,809,256	25%	64%	4%	1%	4%	1%
Arizona	4,763,003	25%	63%	4%	4%	3%	1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2010). 2010 Decennial Census, Summary File 1, Table P11  
Retrieved from: <http://factfinder.census.gov>

**Figure 4. Language spoken at home, by persons ages 5 and older, 2009-2013 five-year estimate**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2014). 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, Table B16001. Retrieved from: <http://factfinder.census.gov>

**Table 9. Household use of languages other than English, 2009-2013 five-year estimate**

	NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS	HOUSEHOLDS IN WHICH A LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH IS SPOKEN	LIMITED ENGLISH SPEAKING HOUSEHOLDS (TOTAL)	LIMITED ENGLISH SPEAKING HOUSEHOLDS (SPANISH)	LIMITED ENGLISH SPEAKING HOUSEHOLDS (NOT SPANISH)
<b>Southwest Maricopa Region</b>	<b>84,580</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>1%</b>
Maricopa County	1,411,727	25%	5%	4%	1%
Arizona	2,370,289	27%	5%	4%	1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2014). 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, Table B16002. Retrieved from: <http://factfinder.census.gov>

## Economic Circumstances

### Why it Matters

Many economic factors contribute to a child's well-being, including family income, parent employment status, and the availability of safety-net programs such as housing and nutrition assistance.<sup>11,12</sup> Understanding the economic context in which families with young children live is crucial when designing programs and policies intended to assist them.

Employment rates and income are common indicators of economic well-being. Unemployment and job loss often results in families having fewer resources to meet their regular monthly expenses and support their children's development. Family dynamics can be negatively impacted by job loss as reflected in higher levels of parental stress, family conflict and more punitive parental behaviors.<sup>13</sup> Parental job loss can also impact children's school performance (shown by lower test scores, poorer attendance, higher risk of grade repetition, suspension or expulsion among children whose parents have lost their jobs.)<sup>14</sup> Unemployment rates, therefore, can be an indicator of family stress, and are also an important indicator of regional economic vitality.

Employment rates and job opportunities contribute to the income families have available. It is estimated that families need an income of about twice the federal poverty level (FPL)<sup>15</sup> to meet basic needs.<sup>16</sup> Families earning less may experience unstable access to basic resources like food and housing. Food insecurity – the lack of reliable access to affordable, nutritious food – negatively impacts the health and well-being of children, including a heightened risk for developmental delays.<sup>17</sup> High housing costs, relative to income, are associated with increased risk for homelessness, overcrowding, poor nutrition, frequent moving, lack of supervision while

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<sup>11</sup> Annie E Casey Foundation. (2015). *Kids Count 2015 Data Book—State Trends in Child Well-being*. Retrieved from <http://www.aecf.org/m/databook/aecf-2015kidscountdatabook-2015-em.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> Kalil, A. (2013). Effects of the great recession on child development. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 650(1), 232-250. Retrieved from <http://ann.sagepub.com/content/650/1/232.full.pdf+html>

<sup>13</sup> Isaacs, J. (2013). *Unemployment from a child's perspective*. Retrieved from <http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/1001671-Unemployment-from-a-Childs-Perspective.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> Ibid

<sup>15</sup> The 2015 FPL for a family of four is \$24,250. Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2015). *2015 Poverty Guidelines*. Retrieved from: <http://aspe.hhs.gov/2015-poverty-guidelines>

<sup>16</sup> National Center for Children in Poverty. (2015). *Arizona Demographics of Low-income Children*. Retrieved from [http://www.nccp.org/profiles/AZ\\_profile\\_6.html](http://www.nccp.org/profiles/AZ_profile_6.html)

<sup>17</sup> Rose-Jacobs, R., Black, M. M., Casey, P. H., Cook, J. T., Cutts, D. B., Chilton, M., Heeren, T., Levenson, S. M., Meyers, A. F., & Frank, D. A. (2008). Household food insecurity: Associations with at-risk infant and toddler development. *Pediatrics*, 121(1), 65-72. Retrieved from <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/121/1/65.full.pdf>

parents are at work, and low cognitive achievement.<sup>18</sup> Poverty, especially among children, can have far reaching negative consequences, including an effect on brain development and later cognitive ability.<sup>19</sup>

Public assistance programs are one way of combating the effects of poverty and providing supports to children and families in need. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families<sup>20</sup> (TANF, which has replaced previous welfare programs) provides cash assistance and services to the very poor and can help offset some of the economic circumstances of families that may have a detrimental effect on young children. Another safety net program, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, also referred to as “Nutrition Assistance” and “food stamps”) has been shown to help reduce hunger and improve access to healthier food.<sup>21</sup> SNAP benefits support working families whose incomes simply do not provide for all their needs. For low-income working families, the additional income from SNAP is substantial. For example, for a three-person family with one person whose wage is \$10 per hour, SNAP benefits boost take-home income by ten to 20 percent.<sup>22</sup> Similarly, the National School Lunch Program<sup>23</sup> provides free and reduced-price meals at school for students whose families meet income criteria. These income criteria are 130 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL) for free lunch, and 185 percent of the FPL for reduced price lunch.

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<sup>18</sup> The Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics. (2015). *America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, 2015*. Retrieved from [http://www.childstats.gov/pdf/ac2015/ac\\_15.pdf](http://www.childstats.gov/pdf/ac2015/ac_15.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> Noble, K.G., Houston, S.M., Brito, N.H., Bartsch, H. Kan E., et. al. (2015). Family income, parental education and brain structure in children and adolescents. *Nature Neuroscience*, 18, 773–778. Retrieved from <http://www.nature.com/neuro/journal/v18/n5/full/nn.3983.html#close>

<sup>20</sup> In Arizona, TANF eligibility is capped at \$335 per month, or \$4020 annually for a family of four, and has recently undergone significant changes. Beginning in 2016, Arizona will become the first and only state that limits a person's lifetime benefit to 12 months. In addition, since 2009, a steadily decreasing percentage of Arizona TANF funds have been spent on three of the key assistance categories: cash assistance to meet basic needs, helping connect parents to employment opportunities, and child care. In 2013, Arizona ranked 51<sup>st</sup>, 47<sup>th</sup>, and 46<sup>th</sup> respectively in proportional spending in those categories across all states and the District of Columbia. Meanwhile, since 2009, an increasing percentage of Arizona TANF funds have been spent on other costs such as child protection, foster care, and adoption. Sources: Reilly, T., and Vitek, K. (2015). *TANF cuts: Is Arizona shortsighted in its dwindling support for poor families?* Retrieved from [https://morrisoninstitute.asu.edu/sites/default/files/content/products/TANF.doc\\_0.pdf](https://morrisoninstitute.asu.edu/sites/default/files/content/products/TANF.doc_0.pdf); Floyd, I., Pavetti, L., and Schott, L. (2015). *How states use federal and state funds under the TANF block grant*. Retrieved from <http://www.cbpp.org/research/family-income-support/how-states-use-federal-and-state-funds-under-the-tanf-block-grant>;

<sup>21</sup> Food Research and Action Center. (2013). *SNAP and Public Health: The Role of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program in Improving the Health and Well-Being of Americans*. Retrieved from [http://frac.org/pdf/snap\\_and\\_public\\_health\\_2013.pdf](http://frac.org/pdf/snap_and_public_health_2013.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> Ibid

<sup>23</sup> United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. (2015). *National School Lunch Program (NSLP)*. Retrieved from <http://www.fns.usda.gov/nslp/national-school-lunch-program-nslp>



## What the Data Tell Us

Thirteen percent of the total (all-age) population of the Southwest Maricopa Region lives in poverty, which is lower than elsewhere in Maricopa County (17% in poverty) or the state (18%) (see Figure 5). The percentage of the population aged 0-5 in poverty in the Southwest Maricopa Region (19%) is higher than the total (all-age) population in the region in poverty (13%), but lower than the population of children aged 0-5 living in poverty across the county (26%) or state (28%). In addition to the families whose incomes fall below the federal poverty level, a proportion of households in the region and county are considered low income (i.e., near but not below the federal poverty level [FPL]). Four out of every ten families (41%) in the region with children aged four and under live below 185 percent of the FPL (i.e., earned less than \$3,677<sup>24</sup> a month for a family of four) compared to 45 percent in the county and nearly half the families (48%) across the state (see Table 10).

Other indicators related to poverty in the region differ somewhat from the county and state. Unemployment rates have been dropping in both Maricopa County and the state since 2010 (see Figure 7). The percentage of residents in the Southwest Maricopa Region paying more than 30 percent of their income on housing (34%) is slightly less than those across the county (37%) or the state (36%). Conversely, the foreclosure rate in the region (10.8 per 10,000 homes) is higher than the rate in the county or across the state (7.2 per 10,000 for both) (see Table 13).

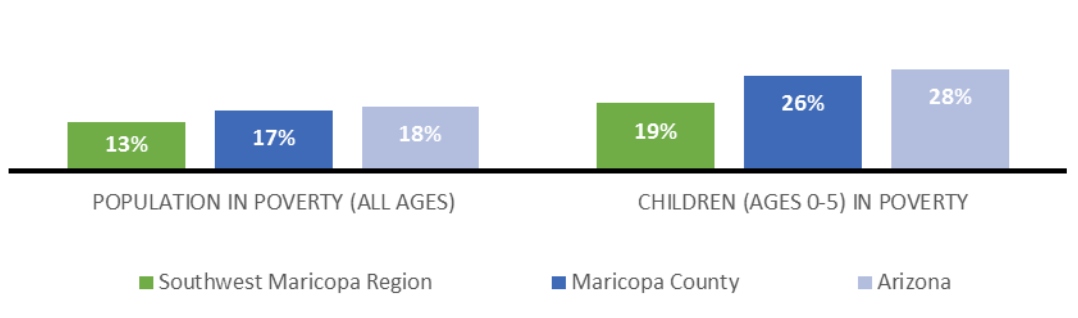
The percentages of children aged 5 and under receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) from 2012 to 2014 were low for the region, county, and the state, and across years, receipt of this benefit has been slightly lower in the Southwest Maricopa Region than elsewhere (see Table 14). Other safety net programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the school-based free or reduced-price lunch program, reached more children. For SNAP, just under half of young children in the Southwest Maricopa Region have received this benefit in the years 2012 through 2014, compared to about half in both Maricopa County across the state as a whole (see Table 15). For both TANF and SNAP, the percentage of young children receiving this benefit has decreased between 2012 and 2014. More than half (54%) of students in Maricopa County were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch between 2012 and 2014 (see Table 16). At the same time, the percent across the state remained at 57 or 58 percent.

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<sup>24</sup> Based on 2014 FPL Guidelines, see <http://aspe.hhs.gov/2014-poverty-guidelines>

## Poverty and Income

**Figure 5. Percent of population in poverty, 2009-2013 five-year estimate**



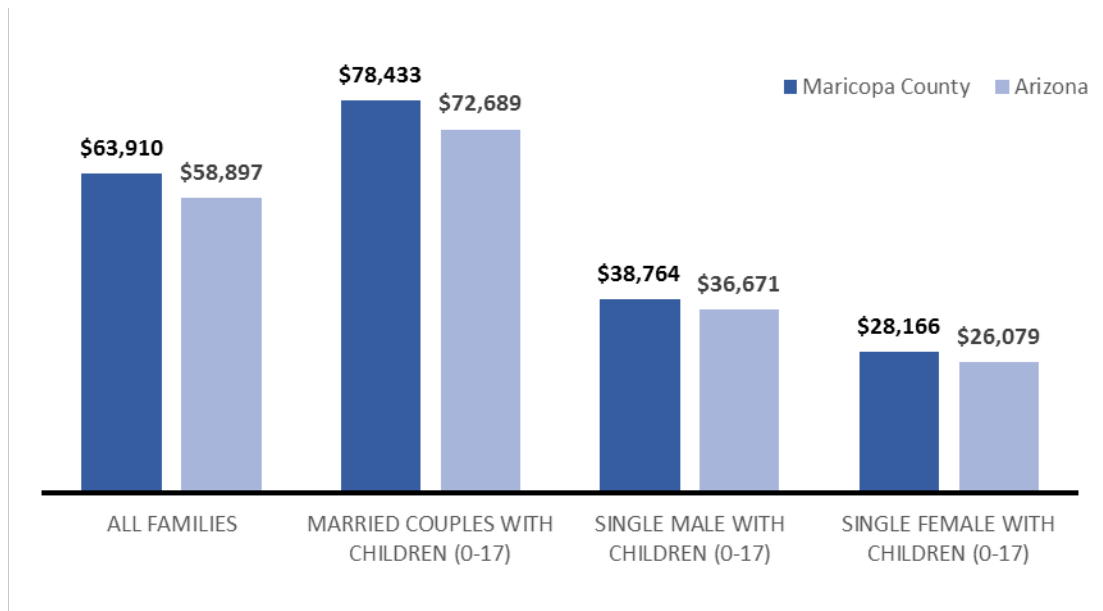
Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2014). 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, Table B17001.  
Retrieved from: <http://factfinder.census.gov>

**Table 10. Federal poverty levels for families with young children (ages 0-4), 2009-2013 five-year estimate**

	FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN 0-4	FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN 0-4			
		BELOW POVERTY	BELOW 130% POVERTY	BELOW 150% POVERTY	BELOW 185% POVERTY
Southwest Maricopa Region	15,691	17%	24%	30%	41%
Maricopa County	192,078	25%	33%	38%	45%
Arizona	307,126	26%	35%	40%	48%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2014). 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, Tables 17010 and 17022.  
Retrieved from: <http://factfinder.census.gov>

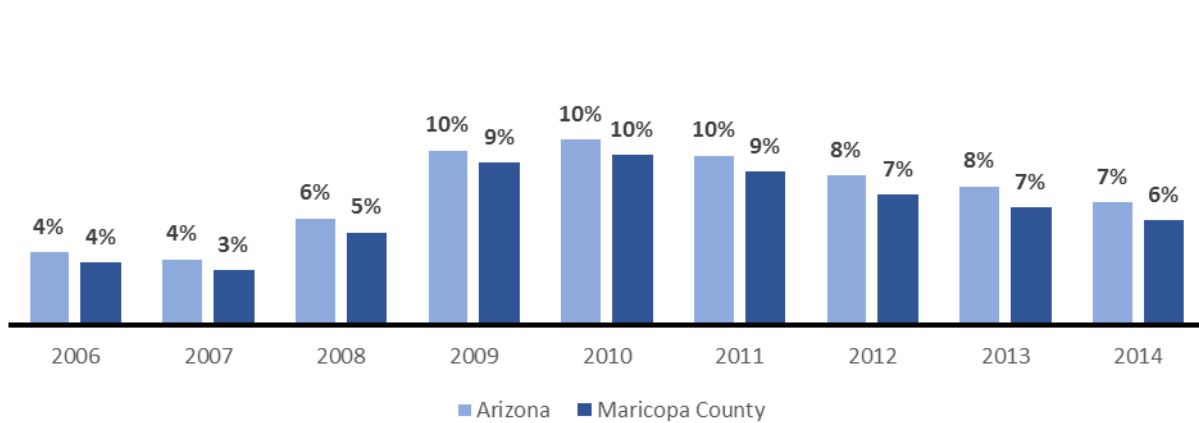
**Figure 6. Median annual family incomes, 2009-2013 five-year estimate**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2014). 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, Table B19126. Retrieved from: <http://factfinder.census.gov>

## Employment and Housing

**Figure 7. Average annual unemployment rates, 2006-2014**



Source: Arizona Labor Statistics (2015). Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS). Retrieved from: <https://laborstats.az.gov/local-area-unemployment-statistics>

**Table 11. Parents of young children (ages 0-5) who are or are not in the labor force, 2009-2013 five-year estimate**

	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF CHILDREN (AGES 0-5) LIVING WITH ONE OR TWO PARENTS	CHILDREN (0-5) LIVING WITH TWO PARENTS			CHILDREN (0-5) LIVING WITH ONE PARENT	
		BOTH PARENTS IN LABOR FORCE	ONE PARENT IN LABOR FORCE	NEITHER PARENT IN LABOR FORCE	PARENT IN LABOR FORCE	PARENT NOT IN LABOR FORCE
Southwest Maricopa Region	26,212	35%	30%	1%	28%	8%
Maricopa County	324,493	32%	29%	1%	28%	9%
Arizona	517,766	31%	29%	1%	29%	10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2014). 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, Table B23008.

Retrieved from: <http://factfinder.census.gov>

Note: Persons who are unemployed but looking for work are considered to be "in the labor force."

**Table 12. Vacant and occupied housing units, 2009-2013 five-year estimate**

	TOTAL HOUSING UNITS	OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS	VACANT HOUSING	
			UNITS (NON- SEASONAL)	UNITS (SEASONAL)
Southwest Maricopa Region	99,907	85%	11%	4%
Maricopa County	1,648,392	86%	10%	4%
Arizona	2,859,768	83%	10%	7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2014). 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, Table B25002, B25106.

Retrieved from: <http://factfinder.census.gov>

Note: Seasonal units are intended for use only in certain seasons or for weekends or other occasional use.

**Table 13. Occupied housing units, costs relative to income, and foreclosures, 2009-2013 five-year estimate**

	NUMBER OF OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS	UNITS WHICH COST THE OWNER OR RENTER MORE THAN 30% OF THEIR INCOME	FORECLOSURE RATE (PER 10,000 HOUSING UNITS)	
Southwest Maricopa Region	84,580	28,936	34%	10.8
Maricopa County	1,411,727	521,467	37%	7.2
Arizona	2,370,289	847,315	36%	7.2

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2014). 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, Table B25002, B25106. RealtyTrac (2015). Real Estate Trend & Market Info.

Retrieved from: <http://factfinder.census.gov>; <http://www.realtytrac.com/statsandtrends/az>

## Economic Supports

**Table 14. Children (ages 0-5) receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), 2012-2014**

	CENSUS 2010 POPULATION (AGES 0-5)	CHILDREN (AGES 0-5) RECEIVING TANF			CHANGE FROM 2012 TO 2014
		2012	2013	2014	
Southwest Maricopa Region	28,512	4%	4%	3%	-22%
Maricopa County	339,217	5%	5%	4%	-27%
Arizona	546,609	5%	5%	4%	-26%

Source: The Arizona Department of Economic Security (July 2015). [SNAP/TANF Dataset]. Unpublished data.

Note: The data reflect unduplicated counts of children served during each calendar year.

**Table 15. Children (ages 0-5) in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), 2012-2014**

	CENSUS 2010 POPULATION (AGES 0-5)	CHILDREN (AGES 0-5) RECEIVING SNAP			CHANGE FROM 2012 TO 2014
		2012	2013	2014	
Southwest Maricopa Region	28,512	48%	48%	47%	-2%
Maricopa County	339,217	52%	51%	48%	-7%
Arizona	546,609	54%	53%	51%	-7%

Source: The Arizona Department of Economic Security (July 2015). [SNAP/TANF Dataset]. Unpublished data.

Note: The data reflect unduplicated counts of children served during each calendar year.

**Table 16. Students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, 2012-2014**

	STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR FREE OR REDUCED- PRICE LUNCH		
	2012	2013	2014
Southwest Maricopa Region			
Maricopa County	54%	54%	54%
Arizona	57%	57%	58%

Source: The Arizona Department of Education (July 2015). [Education Dataset]. Unpublished data.

Note: Regional data were not available for this indicator.

## Educational Indicators

### Why it Matters

Characteristics of educational involvement and achievement in a region, such as school attendance, standardized tests scores, graduation rates, and the overall level of education of adults, all impact the developmental and economic resources available to young children and their families. Education, in and of itself, is an important factor in how able parents and caregivers are to provide for the children in their care. Parents who graduate from high school earn more and are less likely to rely on public assistance programs than those without high school degrees.<sup>25,26</sup> Higher levels of education are associated with better housing, neighborhood of residence, and working conditions, all of which are important for the health and well-being of children.<sup>27,28</sup>

Early school attendance and performance can set the stage for later achievement. Absenteeism in kindergarten is already an indicator of the likelihood of higher rates of absences later in a student's school career, as well as lower achievement in reading and math.<sup>29</sup> By third grade, reading ability is strongly associated with high school completion. One in six third graders who do not read proficiently will not graduate from high school on time, and the rates are even higher (23%) for children who were both not reading proficiently in third grade and living in poverty for at least a year.<sup>30</sup> In recognition of the importance of assuring that children are reading by the third grade, legislators enacted the Arizona Revised Statute §15-701 (also known as the *Move on When Reading* law) which states that as of school year 2013-2014 a student shall not be promoted from the third grade if the student obtains a score on the statewide reading assessment "that demonstrates that the pupil's reading falls far below the

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<sup>25</sup> Planty, M., Hussar, W., Snyder, T., Provasnik, S., Kena, G., Dinkes, R., KewalRamani, A., & Kemp, J. (2008). *The Condition of Education 2008* (NCES 2008-031). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. Retrieved from: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2008/2008031.pdf>

<sup>26</sup> Waldfogel, J., Garfinkel, I., & Kelly, B. (2007). Welfare and the costs of public assistance. In C.R. Belfield and H.M. Levin (Eds.). *The price we pay: Economic and social consequences for inadequate education*. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 160-174.

<sup>27</sup> Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2013). *The First Eight Years. Giving kids a foundation for lifelong success*. Retrieved from <http://www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/AECF-TheFirstEightYearsKCpolicyreport-2013.pdf>

<sup>28</sup> Lynch, J., & Kaplan, G. (2000). Socioeconomic position (pp. 13-35). In *Social Epidemiology*. Berkman, L. F. & Kawachi, I. (Eds.). New York: Oxford University Press.

<sup>29</sup> Romero, M., & Lee, Y. (2007). *A National Portrait of Chronic Absenteeism in the Early Grades*. New York, NY: The National Center for Children in Poverty. Retrieved from [http://www.nccp.org/publications/pdf/text\\_771.pdf](http://www.nccp.org/publications/pdf/text_771.pdf)

<sup>30</sup> Hernandez, D. (2011). *Double jeopardy: How third-grade reading skills and poverty influence high school graduation*. The Annie E. Casey Foundation. Retrieved from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED518818.pdf>

third-grade level.” Exceptions exist for students identified with or being evaluated for learning disabilities, English language learners, and those with reading impairments.

From 2000-2014, the primary in-school performance of students in the public elementary schools in the state has been measured by Arizona’s Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS).<sup>31</sup> AIMS scores were used to meet the requirement of *Move on When Reading*.

However, a new summative assessment system which reflects Arizona’s K-12 academic standards, Arizona’s Measurement of Educational Readiness to Inform Teaching (AzMERIT), was implemented in the 2014-2015 school year.<sup>32</sup> This assessment replaced the reading and mathematics portions of the AIMS test. Although it is not a graduation requirement, it will still be used to determine promotion from the third grade in accordance with Arizona Revised Statute §15-701.<sup>33</sup>

AIMS results are included in this report, but future reports will use AzMERIT scores as they become available.

In order for children to be prepared to succeed on tests such as the AIMS or AzMERIT, research shows that early reading experiences, opportunities to build vocabularies and literacy rich environments are the most effective ways to support the literacy development of young children.<sup>34</sup>

## What the Data Tell Us

Adults aged 25 and older in the Southwest Maricopa Region are less likely to have a bachelor’s degree or more (21%) than adults across the county (30%) or Arizona (27%) (Figure 8). However, same-age adults in the region are slightly more likely to have had some college or professional training than those across the county or state. High school drop-out rates were similar in Maricopa County and in the state of Arizona (both 3% in FY2014) (see Table 17). In addition, four and five year graduation rates in 2013 in Maricopa County (77% and 80% respectively) were slightly higher than in the state (75% and 79%), although they had decreased from highs in the region during 2011 of 80 and 83 percent respectively.

Child academic achievement in the county is very similar to the state. Students are considered to “pass” Arizona’s Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) if they meet or exceed the

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<sup>31</sup> For more information on the AIMS test, see <http://arizonaindicators.org/education/aims>

<sup>32</sup> For more information on AzMERIT, see <http://www.azed.gov/assessment/azmerit/>

<sup>33</sup> For more information on Move on When Reading, see <http://www.azed.gov/mowr/>

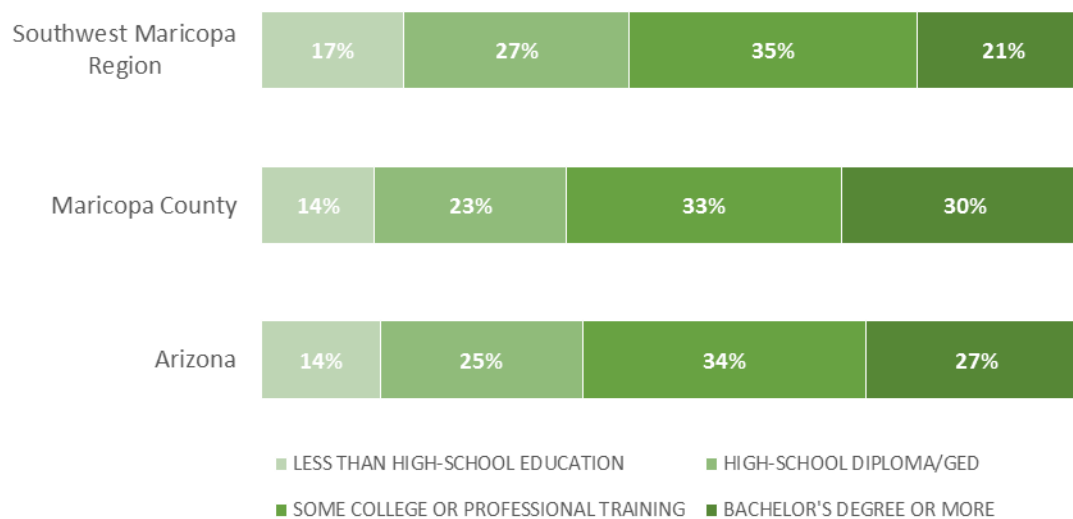
<sup>34</sup> First Things First. (2012). *Read All About It: School Success Rooted in Early Language and Literacy*. Retrieved from [http://www.azftf.gov/WhoWeAre/Board/Documents/Policy\\_Brief\\_Q1-2012.pdf](http://www.azftf.gov/WhoWeAre/Board/Documents/Policy_Brief_Q1-2012.pdf)



standard. AIMS 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Reading and Math results were similar for Maricopa County and the state of Arizona in 2014 (see Figure 9 and Figure 10). Only three percent of 3<sup>rd</sup> graders in the county and state scored “falls far below” in reading; whereas in math, nine percent of 3<sup>rd</sup> graders in Maricopa County and 10 percent in Arizona also received this score.

## Educational Attainment of the Adult Population

**Figure 8. Level of education for the population ages 25 and older, 2009-2013 five-year estimate**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2014). 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, Table B15002

## Graduation and Drop-out Rates

**Table 17. Drop-out and graduation rates, 2012-2014**

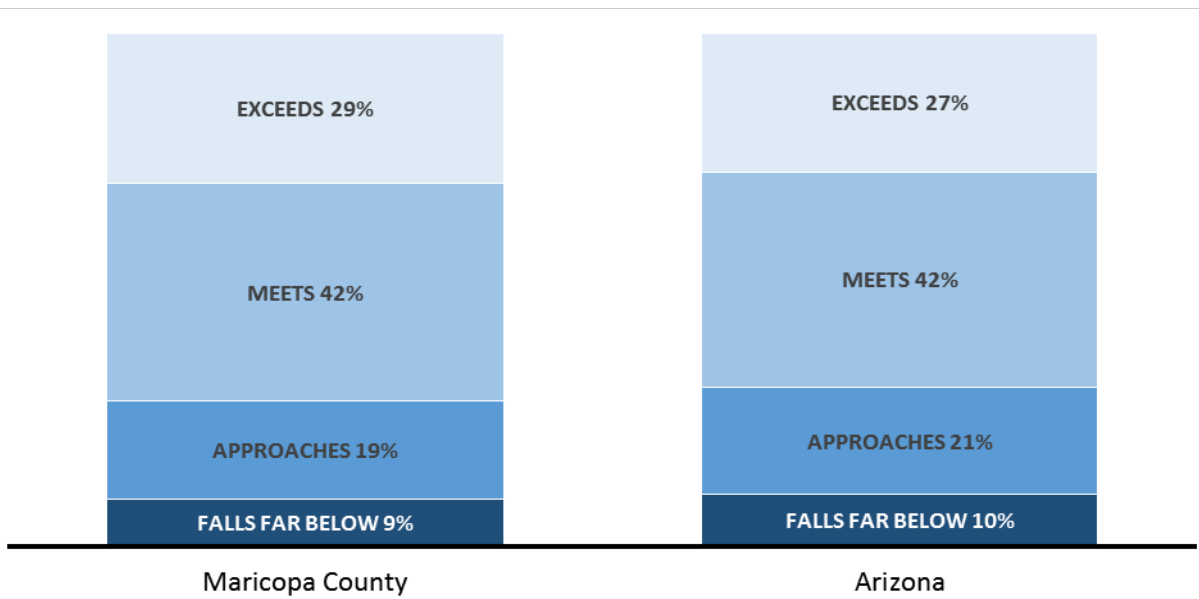
	DROPOUT RATE			FOUR-YEAR GRADUATION RATE			FIVE-YEAR GRADUATION RATE		
	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	2011 COHORT	2012 COHORT	2013 COHORT	2011 COHORT	2012 COHORT	2013 COHORT
Maricopa County	3%	3%	3%	80%	78%	77%	83%	81%	80%
Arizona	4%	4%	3%	78%	77%	75%	81%	80%	79%

Source: The Arizona Department of Education (July 2015). [Education dataset]. Unpublished data.

Note: Regional data were not available for this indicator.

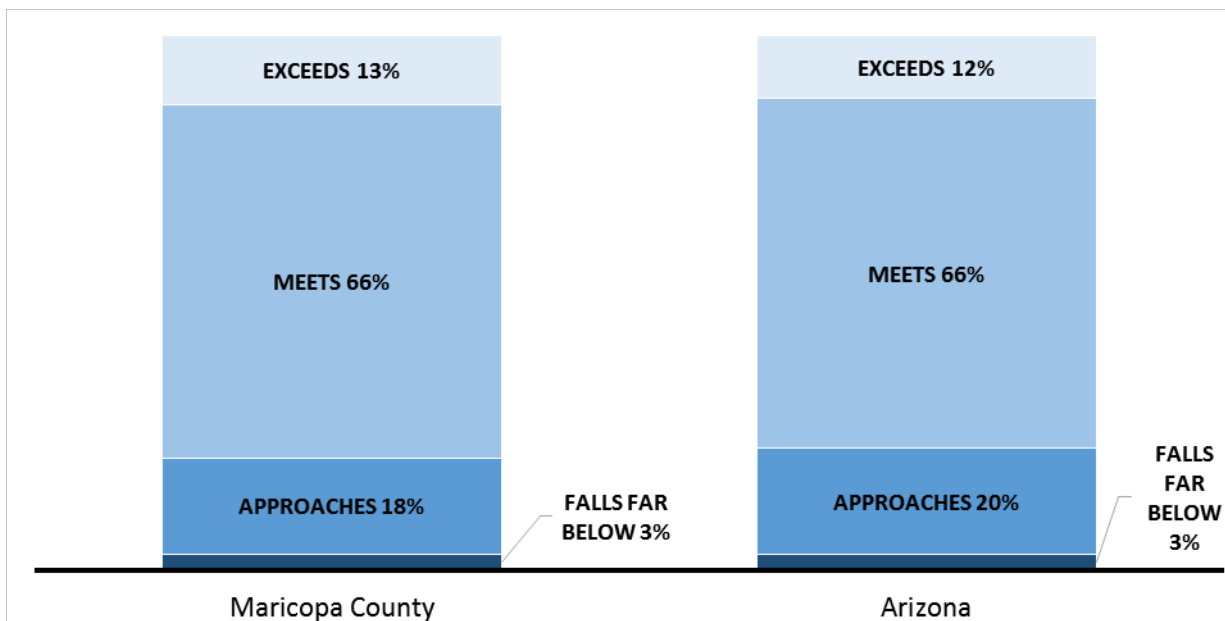
### Third-grade Test Scores

**Figure 9. Results of the 2014 third-grade AIMS Math test**



Source: Arizona Department of Education, Research and Evaluation (2015). AIMS Assessment Results.  
Retrieved from: [www.azed.gov/research-evaluation/aims-assessment-results](http://www.azed.gov/research-evaluation/aims-assessment-results)

**Figure 10. Results of the 2014 third-grade AIMS Reading test**



Source: Arizona Department of Education, Research and Evaluation (2015). AIMS Assessment Results.  
Retrieved from: [www.azed.gov/research-evaluation/aims-assessment-results](http://www.azed.gov/research-evaluation/aims-assessment-results)

## Other Educational Indicators

**Table 18. Percent of students (Pre-K through 3rd grade) who were homeless, 2012-2014**

	HOMELESS IN 2012	HOMELESS IN 2013	HOMELESS IN 2014
Maricopa County	1%	1%	1%
Arizona	2%	2%	2%

Source: The Arizona Department of Education (July 2015). [Education dataset]. Unpublished data.

Note: Regional data were not available for this indicator.

**Table 19. Attendance rates for first-, second-, and third-graders, 2014**

	FIRST-GRADE ENROLLMENT	FIRST-GRADE ATTENDANCE RATE	SECOND- GRADE ENROLLMENT	SECOND-GRADE ATTENDANCE RATE	THIRD-GRADE ENROLLMENT	THIRD-GRADE ATTENDANCE RATE
Maricopa County	51,824	95%	50,105	96%	48,802	96%
Arizona	79,826	95%	76,666	95%	75,029	96%

Source: The Arizona Department of Education (July 2015). [Education dataset]. Unpublished data.

Note: Regional data were not available for this indicator.

## Early Learning

### Why it Matters

Early childhood marks a time of peak plasticity in the brain, and early adversity can weaken the foundation upon which future learning will be built; in other words, positive developmental experiences in early life are crucial.<sup>35</sup> Research has shown that the experiences that children have from birth to five years of age influence future health and well-being, and that supporting children during this time has a great return on investment.<sup>36</sup> Investing in high-quality early childhood programs, particularly for disadvantaged children, provides substantial benefits to society through increased educational achievement and employment, reductions in crime, and better overall health of those children as they mature into adults.<sup>37,38</sup> Children whose education begins with high-quality preschool repeat grades less frequently, obtain higher scores on standardized tests, experience fewer behavior problems, and are more likely to graduate high school.<sup>39</sup>

The ability of families to access quality, affordable early care and education opportunities, however, can be limited. The annual cost of full-time center-based care for a young child in Arizona is only slightly less than a year of tuition and fees at a public college.<sup>40</sup> Although the Department of Health and Human Services recommends that parents spend no more than 10 percent of their family income on child care,<sup>41</sup> the cost of center-based care for a single infant, toddler, or 3-5 year old is an estimated 17, 15 and 11 percent, respectively, of an average Arizona family's income.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University. (2010). *The Foundations of Lifelong Health Are Built in Early Childhood*. Retrieved from <http://developingchild.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Foundations-of-Lifelong-Health.pdf>

<sup>36</sup> Executive Office of the President of the United States. (2014). *The Economics of Early Childhood Investments*. Retrieved from [https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/early\\_childhood\\_report1.pdf](https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/early_childhood_report1.pdf)

<sup>37</sup> The Heckman Equation. (2013). *The Heckman Equation Brochure*. Retrieved from <http://heckmanequation.org/content/resource/heckman-equation-brochure-0>

<sup>38</sup> The Heckman Equation. (n.d.) *Research Summary: Abecedarian & Health*. Retrieved from <http://heckmanequation.org/content/resource/research-summary-abecedarian-health>

<sup>39</sup> Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2013). *The First Eight Years. Giving kids a foundation for lifelong success*. Retrieved from <http://www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/AECF-TheFirstEightYearsKCpolicyreport-2013.pdf>

<sup>40</sup> Child Care Aware® of America. (2014). *Parents and the High Cost of Child Care: 2014 Report*. Retrieved from [https://www.ncsl.org/documents/cyf/2014\\_Parents\\_and\\_the\\_High\\_Cost\\_of\\_Child\\_Care.pdf](https://www.ncsl.org/documents/cyf/2014_Parents_and_the_High_Cost_of_Child_Care.pdf)

<sup>41</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Child Care Bureau (2008). *Child Care and Development Fund: Report of state and territory plans: FY 2008-2009*. Section 3.5.5 – Affordable co-payments, p. 89. Retrieved from <http://www.researchconnections.org/childcare/resources/14784/pdf>

<sup>42</sup> The cost of center-based care as a percentage of income is based on the Arizona median annual family income of \$58,900.

Child care subsidies can help families who otherwise would be unable to access early learning services.<sup>43</sup> However, the availability of this type of support is also limited. The number of children receiving Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) subsidies in Arizona is low. In 2014, only 26,685 children aged birth to 5 (about 5% of Arizona’s children in this age range) received CCDF vouchers. With half of young children in Arizona living below the federal poverty level, the number in need of these subsidies is likely much higher than those receiving them.

The availability of services for young children with special needs is an ongoing concern across the state, particularly in more geographically remote communities. The services available to families include early intervention screening and intervention services provided through the Arizona Department of Education AZ FIND (Child Find),<sup>44</sup> the Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP)<sup>45</sup> and the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD).<sup>46</sup> These programs help identify and assist families with young children who may need additional support to meet their potential. Timely intervention can help young children with, or at risk for, developmental delays improve language, cognitive, and social/emotional development. It also reduces educational costs by decreasing the need for special education.<sup>47,48,49</sup>

## What the Data Tell Us

In 2014, there were 120 licensed child care providers in the Southwest Maricopa Region, licensed to serve 10,455 children (see Table 20). Most of these providers were classified as child care centers (n=82), followed by family child care providers (n=21) and group homes (n=12). The cost of care in Maricopa County varies by the type of care and the age of the child receiving care; the median cost in the county relative to the cost of like care across the state differs depending on the situation (see Table 21). For example, residents in Maricopa County tend to pay higher prices for child care centers (e.g., \$35 per day for 3-5 year olds compared to

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<sup>43</sup> For more information on child care subsidies see <https://www.azdes.gov/child-care/>

<sup>44</sup> For more information on AZ FIND see <http://www.azed.gov/special-education/az-find/>

<sup>45</sup> For more information on AzEIP see <https://www.azdes.gov/azeip/>

<sup>46</sup> For more information on DDD see [https://www.azdes.gov/developmental\\_disabilities/](https://www.azdes.gov/developmental_disabilities/)

<sup>47</sup> The National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center. (2011). *The Importance of Early Intervention for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities and their Families*. Retrieved from <http://www.nectac.org/~pdfs/pubs/importanceofearlyintervention.pdf>

<sup>48</sup> Hebbeler, K, Spiker, D, Bailey, D, Scarborough, A, Mallik, S, Simeonsson, R, Singer, M & Nelson, L. (2007). *Early intervention for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families: Participants, services and outcomes. Final Report of the National Early Intervention Longitudinal Study (NEILS)*. Retrieved from [http://www.sri.com/sites/default/files/publications/neils\\_finalreport\\_200702.pdf](http://www.sri.com/sites/default/files/publications/neils_finalreport_200702.pdf)

<sup>49</sup> NECTAC Clearinghouse on Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education. (2005). *The long term economic benefits of high quality early childhood intervention programs*. Retrieved from <http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/pubs/econbene.pdf>

\$33 elsewhere in the state) but lower prices for approved family homes (e.g., \$16 per day for 3-5 year olds compared to \$20 elsewhere in the state).

According to data from the American Community Survey, a lower proportion of children aged 3 and 4 were enrolled in nursery school, preschool, or kindergarten in the Southwest Maricopa Region (22%) compared to Maricopa County and the state of Arizona (35% for both) (see Table 23).

In the Southwest Maricopa Region, Maricopa County, and across Arizona, most referrals made to the Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP) in FY 2014 were for children aged 25 to 35 months (n=282 for the region) (see Table 24). The pattern of children being served by AzEIP in October of 2014 was similar for the region, county, and the state with more 25 to 35 month olds being served than 13 to 24 month olds and those under 1 year combined. The number of Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) service visits for children aged 0-2 decreased from 2013 to 2014 in the region, county, and state (see Table 25). Service visits for children ages 3-5 also decreased in the county and state; however, in the region, DDD service visits for children aged 3-5 increased slightly (see Table 26).

## Early Care and Education

**Table 20. Child care providers, number of providers and total licensed capacity, 2014**

	CHILD CARE CENTERS		GROUP HOMES		FAMILY CHILD CARE		NANNY OR INDIVIDUAL		ALL TYPES OF CARE	
	NUM	LICENSED CAPACITY	NUM	LICENSED CAPACITY	NUM	LICENSED CAPACITY	NUM	LICENSED CAPACITY	NUM	LICENSED CAPACITY
Southwest Maricopa Region	82	10,241	12	111	21	83	5	20	120	10,455
Maricopa County	1,260	154,359	118	1,152	321	1,279	43	170	1742	156,960
Arizona	2,020	219,482	272	2,683	833	3,312	54	211	3,179	225,688

Source: The Arizona Department of Economic Security (2015). [Child care dataset]. Unpublished data.

Note: "Licensed Capacity" refers to the number of children (of all ages) who may be served, according to the provider's license.

**Table 21. Median daily charge for full-time child care, 2014**

	MEDIAN DAILY CHARGE FOR FULL-TIME CHILD CARE IN LICENSED CHILD CARE CENTERS			MEDIAN DAILY CHARGE FOR FULL-TIME CHILD CARE IN APPROVED FAMILY HOMES			MEDIAN DAILY CHARGE FOR FULL-TIME CHILD CARE IN CERTIFIED GROUP HOMES		
		1 OR 2 YEAR	3 TO 5 YEAR		1 OR 2 YEAR	3 TO 5 YEAR		1 OR 2 YEAR	3 TO 5 YEAR
	INFANT OLD	OLD	OLD	INFANT	OLD	OLD	INFANT	OLD	OLD
Maricopa County	\$44.19	\$40	\$35	\$20	\$20	\$16	\$30	\$27	\$25
Arizona	\$42	\$38	\$33	\$22	\$20	\$20	\$27	\$25	\$25

Source: Arizona Department of Economic Security (2015). Child Care Market Rate Survey. Received by request.

Note: Regional data were not available for this indicator.

**Table 22. Cost of child care in a licensed center as a percentage of median family income**

MEDIAN ANNUAL FAMILY INCOME	CHARGE FOR FULL-TIME CHILDCARE IN A LICENSED CHILDCARE CENTER AS A PERCENTAGE OF MEDIAN INCOME			
	INFANT	1 OR 2 YEAR OLD	3 TO 5 YEAR OLD	
Maricopa County	\$63,900	17%	15%	13%
Arizona	\$58,900	17%	15%	11%

Source: United State Census Bureau (2014). 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, Table B19126. Retrieved from <http://factfinder.census.gov>; Arizona Department of Economic Security (2015). [2014 Child care market rate survey data]. Received by request.

Note: Regional data were not available for this indicator.

**Table 23. Estimated number of children (ages 3 or 4) enrolled in nursery school, preschool, or kindergarten, 2009-2013 five-year estimate**

	ESTIMATED POPULATION (AGES 3-4)	ENROLLED IN SCHOOL (AGES 3-4)	
Southwest Maricopa Region	9,579	2,154	22%
Maricopa County	115,608	40,746	35%
Arizona	185,310	65,591	35%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2014). 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, Table B14003.

Retrieved from: <http://factfinder.census.gov>



## Families with Children Who Have Special Needs

**Table 24. AzEIP referrals and children served, 2014**

	NUMBER OF AzEIP REFERRALS DURING FISCAL YEAR 2014			NUMBER OF CHILDREN BEING SERVED BY AzEIP ON OCTOBER 1, 2014		
	LESS THAN 1 YEAR OLD	FROM 13 TO 24 MONTHS OLD	FROM 25 TO 35 MONTHS OLD	LESS THAN 1 YEAR OLD	FROM 13 TO 24 MONTHS OLD	FROM 25 TO 35 MONTHS OLD
<b>Southwest Maricopa Region</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>126</b>
Maricopa County	1,646	2,325	3,528	487	1,113	1,874
Arizona	2,651	3,669	5,421	746	1,659	2,843

Source: Arizona Department of Economic Security (July 2015). [Special needs dataset]. Unpublished data.

**Table 25. Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) services to children (ages 0-2), 2013-2014**

	CHILDREN (AGES 0-2) REFERRED TO DDD		CHILDREN (AGES 0-2) SCREENED BY DDD		CHILDREN (AGES 0-2) SERVED BY DDD		NUMBER OF DDD SERVICE VISITS TO CHILDREN (AGES 0-2)	
	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2013	FY 2014
<b>Southwest Maricopa Region</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>8,683</b>	<b>7,702</b>
Maricopa County	1,538	1,763	217	157	1,918	1,662	117,268	98,971
Arizona	2,186	2,479	314	216	2,693	2,341	158,496	130,486

Source: Arizona Department of Economic Security (July 2015). [Special needs dataset]. Unpublished data.

Note: Entries of "N/A" indicate percentages which cannot be reported because of data suppression, or are otherwise not available.

**Table 26. Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) services to children (ages 3-5), 2013-2014**

	CHILDREN (AGES 3-5) REFERRED TO DDD		CHILDREN (AGES 3-5) SCREENED BY DDD		CHILDREN (AGES 3-5) SERVED BY DDD		NUMBER OF DDD SERVICE VISITS TO CHILDREN (AGES 3-5)	
	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2013	FY 2014
<b>Southwest Maricopa Region</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>23,259</b>	<b>23,497</b>
Maricopa County	963	1,266	506	509	1,891	1,847	294,586	285,484
Arizona	1,401	1,804	731	727	2,600	2,533	374,440	367,590

Source: Arizona Department of Economic Security (July 2015). [Special needs dataset]. Unpublished data.

## Child Health

### Why it Matters

The Institute of Medicine defines children’s health as the extent to which children are able or enabled to develop and realize their potential, satisfy their needs, and develop the capacities that allow them to successfully interact with their biological, physical, and social environments.<sup>50</sup> Health therefore encompasses not only physical health, but also mental, intellectual, social, and emotional well-being. Children’s health can be influenced by their mother’s health and the environment into which they are born and raised.<sup>51,52</sup> The health of a child in utero, at birth, and in early life can impact many aspects of a child’s development and later life. Factors such as a mother’s prenatal care, access to health care and health insurance, and receipt of preventive care such as immunizations and oral health care all influence not only a child’s current health, but long-term development and success as well.<sup>53,54,55</sup> In addition, nonfatal unintentional injuries substantially impact the well-being of children,<sup>56</sup> and injuries are the leading cause of death in children in the United States.<sup>57</sup>

Healthy People is a science-based government initiative which provides 10-year national objectives for improving the health of Americans. Healthy People 2020 targets are developed with the use of current health data, baseline measures, and areas for specific

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<sup>50</sup> National Research Council and Institute of Medicine. (2004). *Children's Health, the Nation's Wealth: Assessing and Improving Child Health*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press. Retrieved from <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK92198/#ch2.s3>

<sup>51</sup> The Future of Children. (2015). *Policies to Promote Child Health, (25)*1. Retrieved from <http://www.princeton.edu/futureofchildren/publications/docs/FOC-spring-2015.pdf>

<sup>52</sup> Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University. (2010). *The Foundations of Lifelong Health Are Built in Early Childhood*. Retrieved from <http://developingchild.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Foundations-of-Lifelong-Health.pdf>

<sup>53</sup> Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Health Resources and Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (n.d.) *Prenatal services*. Retrieved from <http://mchb.hrsa.gov/programs/womeninfants/prenatal.html>

<sup>54</sup> Patrick, D. L., Lee, R. S., Nucci, M., Grembowski, D., Jolles, C. Z., & Milgrom, P. (2006). Reducing oral health disparities: A focus on social and cultural determinants. *BMC Oral Health, 6*(Suppl 1), S4. Retrieved from <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2147600/>

<sup>55</sup> Council on Children With Disabilities, Section on Developmental Behavioral Pediatrics, Bright Futures Steering Committee, and Medical Home Initiatives for Children With Special Needs Project Advisory Committee. (2006). Identifying infants and young children with developmental disorders in the medical home: An algorithm for developmental surveillance and screening. *Pediatrics, 118*s(1), 405-420. Retrieved from <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/118/1/405.full>

<sup>56</sup> Danesco, E.R., Miller, T.R., & Spicer, R. S. (2000). Incidence and costs of 1987-1994 childhood injuries: Demographic breakdowns. *Pediatrics, 105*(2), E27. Retrieved from <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/105/2/e27.long>

<sup>57</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. (2013). *10 Leading Causes of Death by Age Group, United States-2013*. Retrieved from [http://www.cdc.gov/injury/images/lc-charts/leading\\_causes\\_of\\_death\\_by\\_age\\_group\\_2013-a.gif](http://www.cdc.gov/injury/images/lc-charts/leading_causes_of_death_by_age_group_2013-a.gif)

improvement. Understanding where Arizona mothers and children fall in relation to these national benchmarks 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 regional 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.<sup>58</sup> Although not a target of a Healthy People 2020 objective, high-birth weight, or macrosomia, is also associated with health risks for both the mother and infant during birth. These children are also at increased risk for obesity and metabolic syndrome (which is linked to an increase risk of heart disease, stroke, and diabetes).<sup>59</sup>

The ability to obtain health care is critical for supporting the health of young children. In the early years of a child’s life, well-baby and well-child visits allow clinicians to offer developmentally appropriate information and guidance to parents and provide a chance for health professionals to assess the child’s development and administer preventative care measures like vaccines and developmental screenings. Without health insurance, each visit can be prohibitively expensive and may be skipped.<sup>60</sup>

## What the Data Tell Us

Mothers who gave birth in 2013 in the Southwest Maricopa Region exhibited healthier behaviors than mothers in Maricopa County and across the state of Arizona (see Table 27). For example, three percent of women giving birth in the Southwest Maricopa Region had fewer than five prenatal visits, compared to four percent in Maricopa County and five percent across the state overall. A lower proportion of mothers in the Southwest Maricopa Region reported smoking (3%) than in the county (4%) or state (4%). The region is also doing well in terms of meeting the Healthy People 2020 objective related to the proportion of expectant mothers who receive prenatal care in the first trimester; at 14 percent, the region falls below the Healthy People 2020 guideline of no more than 22.1 percent of mothers lacking prenatal care (see

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<sup>58</sup> Arizona Department of Health Services. (2013). *Arizona Health Status and Vital Statistics 2013 Annual Report. Table 6A: Monitoring Progress Toward Arizona and Selected Healthy People 2020 Objectives: Statewide Trends* Retrieved from [http://www.azdhs.gov/plan/report/ahs/ahs2013/pdf/6a1\\_10.pdf](http://www.azdhs.gov/plan/report/ahs/ahs2013/pdf/6a1_10.pdf)

<sup>59</sup> Mayo Clinic Staff. (2015). *Fetal macrosomia*. Retrieved from <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/fetal-macrosomia/basics/complications/con-20035423>

<sup>60</sup> Yeung, LF, Coates, RJ, Seeff, L, Monroe, JA, Lu, MC, & Boyle, CA. (2014). Conclusions and future directions for periodic reporting on the use of selected clinical preventive services to improve the health of infants, children, and adolescents—United States. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report 2014*, 63(Suppl-2), 99-107. Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/other/su6302.pdf>.

Figure 11). However, for the proportion of women who smoke while pregnant objective, the region falls just above the Healthy People 2020 goal of 1.4 percent.

The Southwest Maricopa Region is meeting additional Healthy People 2020 objectives for infant and child health. Healthy People 2020 objectives include that fewer than 7.8 percent of babies are born at low birth weights and fewer than 11.4 percent are born preterm. In the region in 2013, seven percent of babies were low birth weight and 10 percent were premature (see Figure 12).

Regarding both non-fatal hospitalizations and emergency department visits, unintentional injuries for children under age six declined between 2012 and 2014 in both the county and state (see Table 29).

A key factor in health care is health insurance, and young children in the Southwest Maricopa Region were as likely to be uninsured as young children in the county and state (10% for all) (see Figure 15). Compared to young children, members of the total (all ages) population of the region, county, and state were more likely to lack health insurance. Additionally, more of the total population in the Southwest Maricopa Region was uninsured (18%) than in Maricopa County (17%) or the state (17%).

While immunization rates vary by vaccine, over 90 percent of children in child care in the Southwest Maricopa Region completed each of the three major (DTAP, polio, and MMR) vaccine series; these rates were similar to those of the county and state (see Table 31). The Healthy People 2020 target for vaccination coverage for children ages 19-35 months for these vaccines is 90 percent,<sup>61</sup> suggesting the region is meeting this goal. However, given that state regulations require children enrolled in child care to be up to date on immunizations, it is possible that the rates of immunization for children in child care are higher than immunization rates for children not in child care.<sup>62</sup> If that is the case, the rates for the entire population of children in these areas may be lower than the Healthy People 2020 goal. Children in kindergarten were vaccinated at similar rates compared to children in child care for the region, and the region's rates of vaccine coverage for kindergarteners were similar to those at the

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<sup>61</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. (2015). *Immunization and Infectious Diseases*. Washington, DC. Retrieved from: <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/immunization-and-infectious-diseases/objectives>

<sup>62</sup> For example, the National Immunization Survey (NIS) monitors vaccination coverage among U.S. children aged 19–35 months, and estimates the Arizona statewide rate for DTAP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, 4 or more doses) to be about 81 percent and the statewide rate for MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella, 1 or more doses) to be about 84 percent. Source: Hill, H., Elam-Evans, L., Yankey, D., Singleton, J., Kolasa, M. (2015). National, state, and selected local area vaccination coverage among children aged 19–35 months—United States. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 2014, 64(33), 889-896. Retrieved from: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6433a1.htm>

county and state level (Table 32). The Southwest Maricopa Region had slightly lower rates of religious and personal belief exemptions from immunizations than the county or the state.

## Mothers Giving Birth

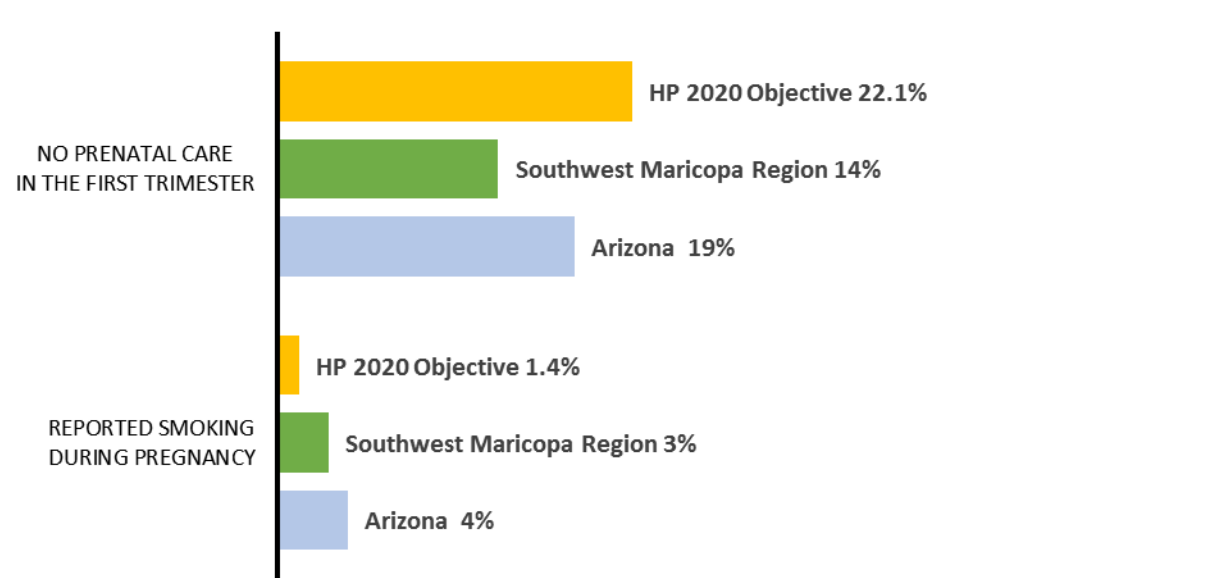
**Table 27. Selected characteristics of mothers giving birth, 2013**

	TOTAL NUMBER BIRTHS TO ARIZONA- RESIDENT MOTHERS, 2013	HAD FEWER THAN 5 PRENATAL VISITS	HAD NO PRENATAL CARE IN FIRST TRI- MESTER	MOTHER REPORTED SMOKING DURING PREG- NANCY	MOTHER REPORTED DRINKING DURING PREG- NANCY	MOTHER HAD LESS THAN A HIGH SCHOOL- EDU- CATION	MOTHERS YOUNGER THAN 20 YEARS OLD	MOTHERS YOUNGER THAN 18 YEARS OLD	BIRTH WAS PAID FOR BY AHCCCS OR IHS (PUBLIC PAYOR)
<b>Southwest Maricopa Region</b>	<b>4,289</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>50%</b>
Maricopa County	53,848	4%	15%	4%	0%	17%	8%	2%	53%
Arizona	84,963	5%	19%	4%	0%	18%	9%	2%	55%

Source: Arizona Department of Health Services (July 2015). [Vital statistics dataset]. Unpublished data.

Note: Entries of "N/A" indicate percentages which cannot be reported because of data suppression, or are otherwise not available.

**Figure 11. Healthy People 2020 objectives for mothers, compared to 2013 region and state data**



Source: Arizona Department of Health Services (July 2015). [Vital statistics dataset]. Unpublished data. Arizona Department of Health Services (2015). Status on Healthy People 2020 Objectives, Table 6A. Retrieved from <http://www.azdhs.gov/plan/menu/info/status.php>

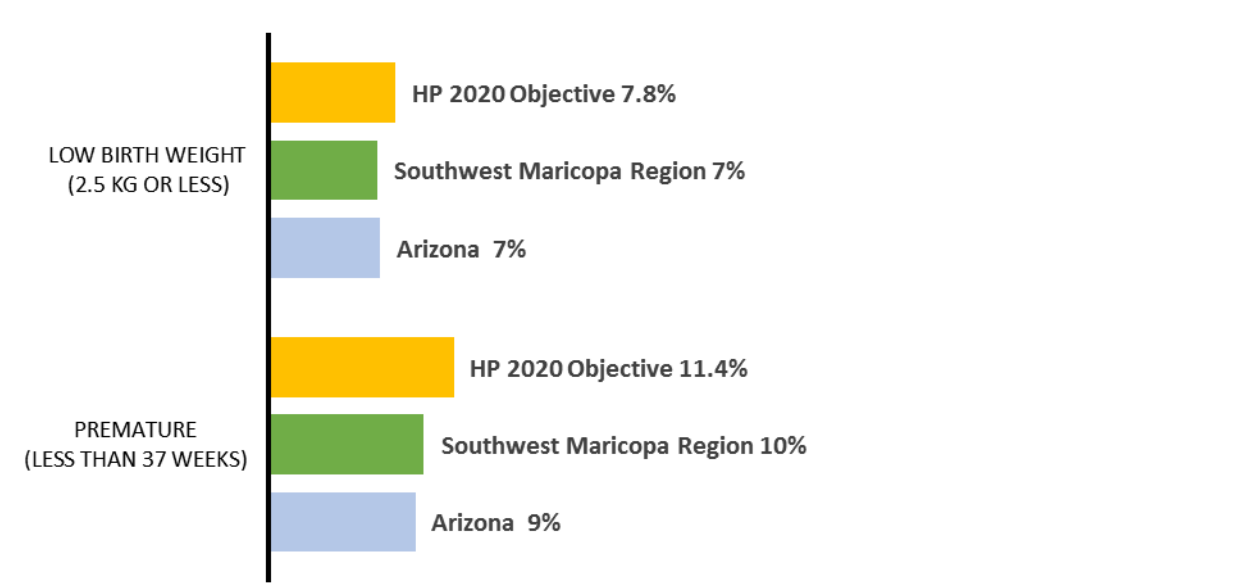
## Infant Health

**Table 28. Selected characteristics of babies born, 2013**

	TOTAL NUMBER OF BIRTHS TO ARIZONA-RESIDENT MOTHERS, 2013	BABY HAD LOW BIRTH WEIGHT (2.5 kg OR LESS)	BABY HAD HIGH BIRTH WEIGHT (4 kg OR MORE)	BABY WAS PREMATURE (LESS THAN 37 WEEKS)	BABY WAS IN NEONATAL INTENSIVE CARE
Southwest Maricopa Region	4,289	7%	7%	10%	4%
Maricopa County	53,848	7%	8%	9%	6%
Arizona	84,963	7%	8%	9%	5%

Source: Arizona Department of Health Services (July 2015). [Vital statistics dataset]. Unpublished data.

**Figure 12. Healthy People 2020 objectives for babies, compared to 2013 region and state data**



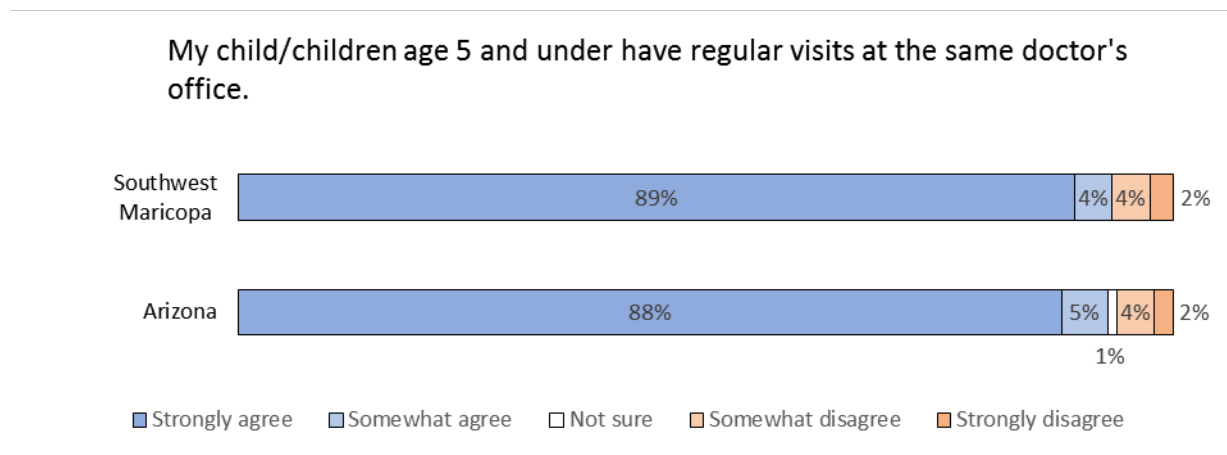
Source: Arizona Department of Health Services (July 2015). [Vital statistics dataset]. Unpublished data. Arizona Department of Health Services (2015). Status on Healthy People 2020 Objectives, Table 6A. Retrieved from <http://www.azdhs.gov/plan/menu/info/status.php>

**Table 29. Unintentional injuries to children (ages 0-5), 2012-2014**

	NON-FATAL INPATIENT HOSPITALIZATIONS			NON-FATAL EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT VISITS		
	2012	2013	2014	2012	2013	2014
Maricopa County	844	671	569	31,927	29,422	29,432
Arizona	1,306	1,049	901	49,453	46,407	46,033

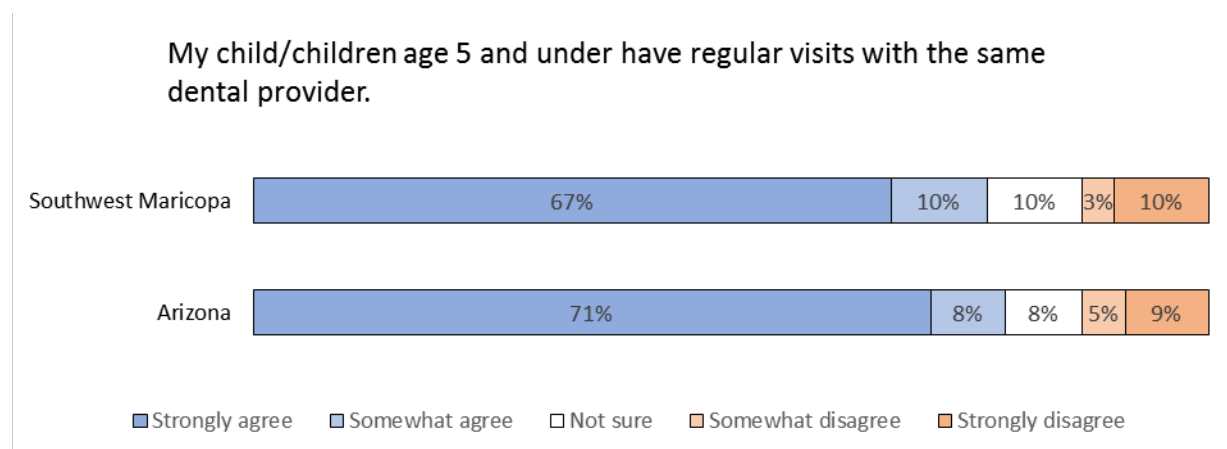
Source: Arizona Department of Health Services (June 2015). [Injury report]. Received by request.  
 Note: Regional data were not available for this indicator.

**Figure 13. Regular visits at the same doctor's office (Family and Community Survey, 2012)**



Source: First Things First (2014). [2012 Family and Community Survey data]. Unpublished data.

**Figure 14. Regular visits with the same dental provider (Family and Community Survey, 2012)**

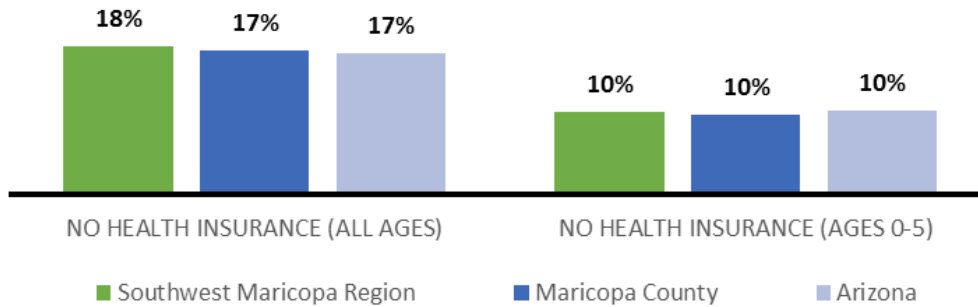


Source: First Things First (2014). [2012 Family and Community Survey data]. Unpublished data.



## Health Insurance

**Figure 15. Estimated percent of population without health insurance, 2009-2013 five-year estimate**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2014). 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, Table B27001.  
Retrieved from: <http://factfinder.census.gov>

**Table 30. Number of children (all ages) enrolled in KidsCare, 2005-2014**

	JAN 2005	JAN 2006	JAN 2007	JAN 2008	JAN 2009	JAN 2010	JAN 2011	JAN 2012	JAN 2013	JAN 2014
Maricopa County	29,885	34,932	37,659	41,026	39,476	28,294	14,196	8,066	21,125	26,353
Arizona	48,075	55,996	58,612	63,527	61,198	45,809	22,943	12,837	34,127	42,686

Source: Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (2014). KidsCare Population Reports  
Note: Regional data were not available for this indicator.

## Immunizations

**Table 31. Immunizations for children in child care, school year 2014-2015**

	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	DTAP (DIPHTHERIA, TETANUS, PERTUSSIS), 4 OR MORE DOSES	POLIO, 3 OR MORE DOSES	MMR (MEASLES, MUMPS, RUBELLA), 1 OR MORE DOSES	RELIGIOUS BELIEFS EXEMPTIONS	MEDICAL EXEMPTIONS
<b>Southwest Maricopa Region</b>	<b>2,997</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>2.9%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>
Maricopa County	55,622	92%	95%	95%	4.5%	0.5%
Arizona	84,778	93%	95%	96%	3.6%	0.5%

Source: Arizona Department of Health Services (2015). [Regional immunization dataset]. Unpublished data. Arizona Department of Health Services (2015). Arizona childcare immunization coverage. Retrieved from: <http://azdhs.gov/preparedness/epidemiology-disease-control/immunization/index.php#reports-immunization-coverage>

**Table 32. Immunizations for children in kindergarten, school year 2014-2015**

	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	DTAP (DIPHTHERIA, TETANUS, PERTUSSIS), 4 OR MORE DOSES	POLIO, 3 OR MORE DOSES	MMR (MEASLES, MUMPS, RUBELLA), 1 OR MORE DOSES	PERSONAL BELIEFS EXEMPTIONS	MEDICAL EXEMPTIONS
<b>Southwest Maricopa Region</b>	<b>4,929</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>4.1%</b>	<b>0.2%</b>
Maricopa County	54,292	94%	94%	94%	5.1%	0.3%
Arizona	84,651	94%	95%	94%	4.6%	0.3%

Source: Arizona Department of Health Services (2015). [Regional immunization dataset]. Unpublished data. Arizona Department of Health Services (2015). Arizona kindergarten immunization coverage. Retrieved from: <http://azdhs.gov/preparedness/epidemiology-disease-control/immunization/index.php#reports-immunization-coverage>

## Family Support and Literacy

### Why it Matters

Parents and families have a crucial role in providing nurturing and stable relationships for optimal brain development during their child's first years.<sup>63,64,65</sup> When children experience nurturing, responsive caregiving, they face better life prospects across a number of social, physical, academic and economic outcomes.<sup>66,67</sup> Consequently, healthy development depends on positive relationships between children and their caregivers from an early age.<sup>68</sup> For parents of young children, reading aloud, singings songs, practicing nursery rhymes, and engaging in conversation primes children to reach their full potential. Such interactions not only support literacy skills, but also offer exposure to a range of ideas, including recognizing and naming emotions, an important socio-emotional skill. Parents and family are children's first teachers; the most rapid expansion in vocabulary happens between ages one and three.<sup>69</sup> In fact, literacy promotion is so central to a child's development that the American Academy of Pediatrics has recently focused on it as a key issue in primary pediatric care, aiming to make parents more aware of their important role in literacy.<sup>70</sup>

Data on the amount and quality of the interaction parents typically have with their children can be useful to inform programs and policies to encourage positive engagement. Communities may employ many resources to support families in engaging with their children. Examples of these opportunities include: home visitation programs; "stay and play" programs featuring developmentally appropriate activities for children and their parents; Read On Arizona, a

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<sup>63</sup> Evans, G. W., & Kim, P. (2013). Childhood poverty, chronic stress, self-regulation, and coping. *Child Development Perspectives*, 7(1), 43-48. Retrieved from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/cdep.12013/abstract>

<sup>64</sup> Shonkoff, J. P., & Fisher, P. A. (2013). Rethinking evidence-based practice and two-generation programs to create the future of early childhood policy. *Development and Psychopathology*, 25, 1635- 1653. Retrieved from [http://journals.cambridge.org/download.php?file=%2FDPP%2FDPP25\\_4pt2%2FS0954579413000813a.pdf&code=aeb62de3e0ea8214329e7a33e0a9df0e](http://journals.cambridge.org/download.php?file=%2FDPP%2FDPP25_4pt2%2FS0954579413000813a.pdf&code=aeb62de3e0ea8214329e7a33e0a9df0e)

<sup>65</sup> Shonkoff, J. P. & Phillips, D. A. (2000). *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development*. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press. Retrieved from <http://www.nap.edu/read/9824/chapter/1>

<sup>66</sup> Magnuson, K. & Duncan, G. (2013). Parents in poverty (95-121) In Bornstein, M. *Handbook of Parenting: Biology and Ecology of Parenting Vol. 4: Social Conditions and Applied Parenting*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.

<sup>67</sup> Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University. (2010). *The Foundations of Lifelong Health Are Built in Early Childhood*. Retrieved from <http://www.developingchild.harvard.edu>

<sup>68</sup> National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. (n.d.). Category: Working Papers. Retrieved from <http://developingchild.harvard.edu/resourcecategory/working-papers/>

<sup>69</sup> Read On Arizona. (n.d.). *As a parent what can I do at home to support early literacy?* Retrieved from <http://readonarizona.org/about-us/faq/>

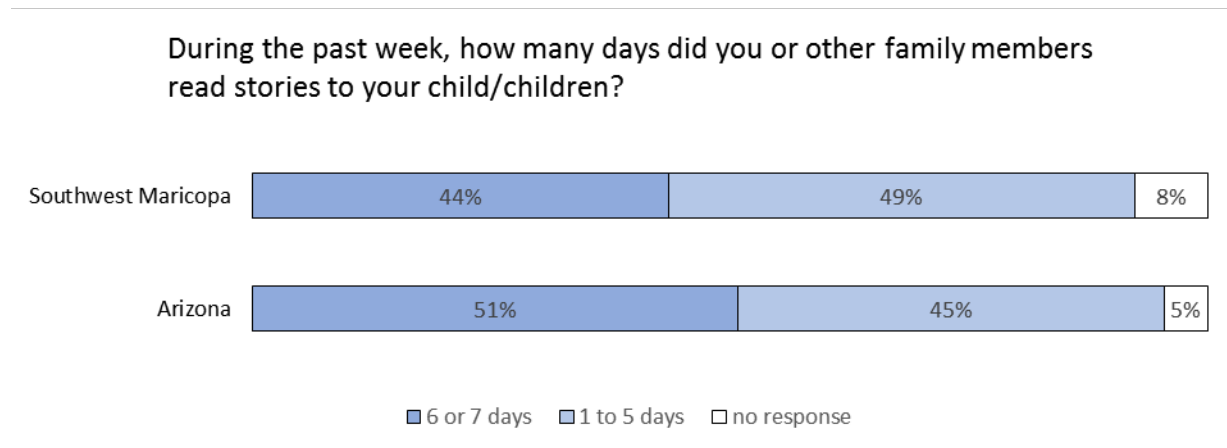
<sup>70</sup> American Academy of Pediatrics. (n.d.). *Pediatric Professional Resource: Evidence Supporting Early Literacy and Early Learning*. Retrieved from [https://www.aap.org/en-us/Documents/booksbuildconnections\\_evidencesupportingearlyliteracyandearlylearning.pdf](https://www.aap.org/en-us/Documents/booksbuildconnections_evidencesupportingearlyliteracyandearlylearning.pdf)

program that promotes early literacy; and the national “Reach Out & Read” program, in which nearly 200 clinics and pediatric practices across the state seeing children for a well-child visit provide them with a book to take home.<sup>71</sup>

### What the Data Tell Us

The First Things First Family and Community Survey is a phone-based survey designed to measure many critical areas of parents’ knowledge, skills, and behaviors related to their young children. In the Southwest Maricopa Region, 150 people responded to the 2012 First Things First Family and Community Survey. Among other topics, the 2012 survey collected data about parent and caregiver knowledge of children’s early development and their involvement in a variety of behaviors known to contribute positively to healthy development. Parents in the Southwest Maricopa Region were less likely to report reading to their children (44%) and telling stories to their children (46%), but as likely to report drawing with their child (47%) six or seven days a week compared to parents across the state (51%, 51% and 47% respectively) (see Figure 16, Figure 17, and Figure 18). Parents in the Southwest Maricopa Region also showed a lower level of understanding that brain development can be impacted prenatally or right from birth (70%) than did respondents across the state as a whole (80%) (see Figure 19).

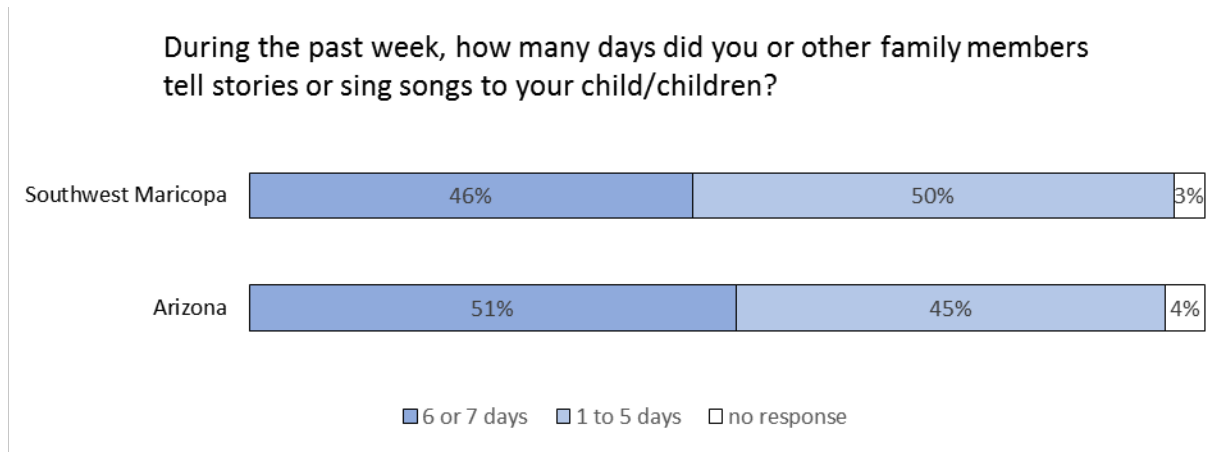
**Figure 16. Reading stories to young children (Family and Community Survey, 2012)**



Source: First Things First (2014). [2012 Family and Community Survey data]. Unpublished data.

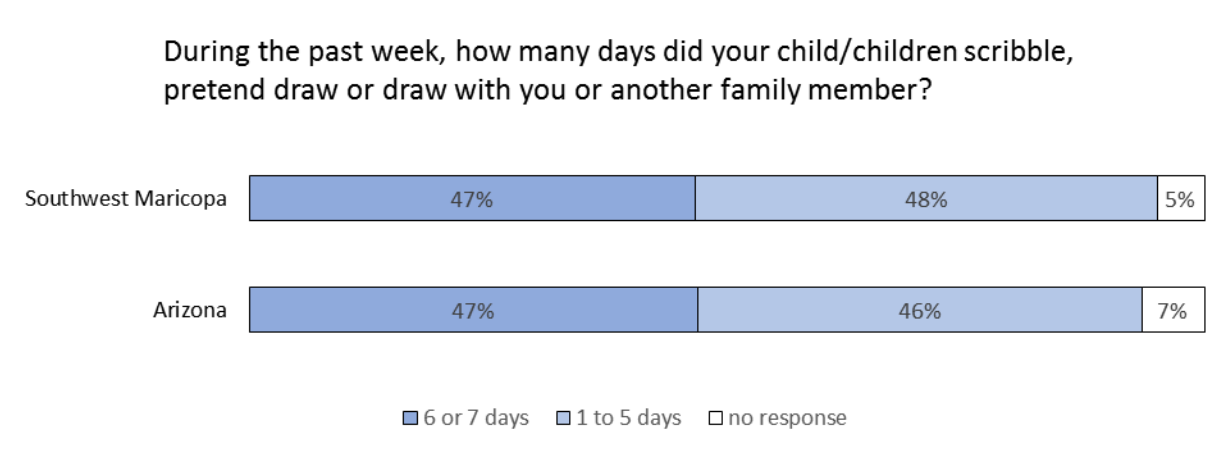
<sup>71</sup> Reach Out and Read. (n.d.). *Programs Near You*. Retrieved from <http://www.reachoutandread.org/resource-center/find-a-program/>

**Figure 17. Telling stories or singing songs to young children (Family and Community Survey, 2012)**



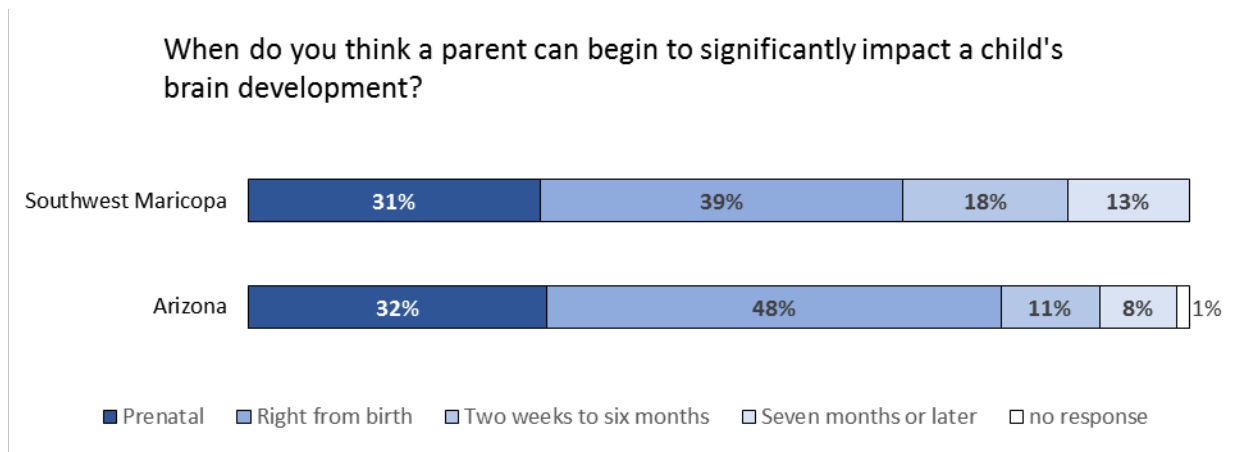
Source: First Things First (2014). [2012 Family and Community Survey data]. Unpublished data.

**Figure 18. Drawing and scribbling with young children (Family and Community Survey, 2012)**



Source: First Things First (2014). [2012 Family and Community Survey data]. Unpublished data.

**Figure 19. Understanding of prenatal brain development (Family and Community Survey, 2012)**



Source: First Things First (2014). [2012 Family and Community Survey data]. Unpublished data.

## Communication, Public Information and Awareness

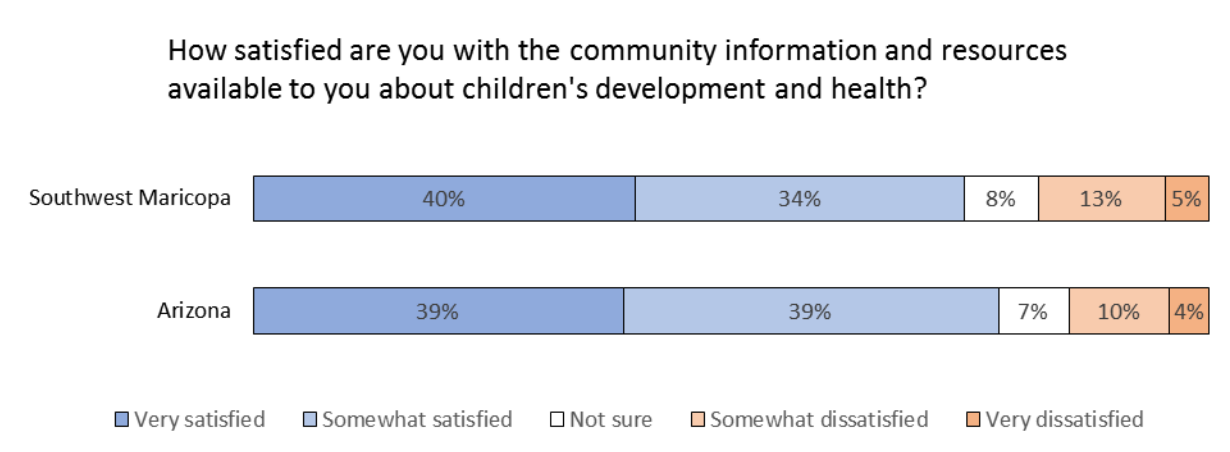
### Why it Matters

To create a strong, comprehensive, and sustainable early childhood system, communities need an awareness of the importance of the first five years in a child’s life, and a commitment to align priorities and resources to programs and policies affecting these first years. Supporting public awareness by providing accessible information and resources on early childhood development and health, and educating community members about the benefits of committing resources to early childhood, are key to supporting and growing this system. Assessing the reach of these educational and informational efforts in First Things First regions across the state can help early childhood leadership and stakeholders refine, expand or re-direct these efforts.

### What the Data Tell Us

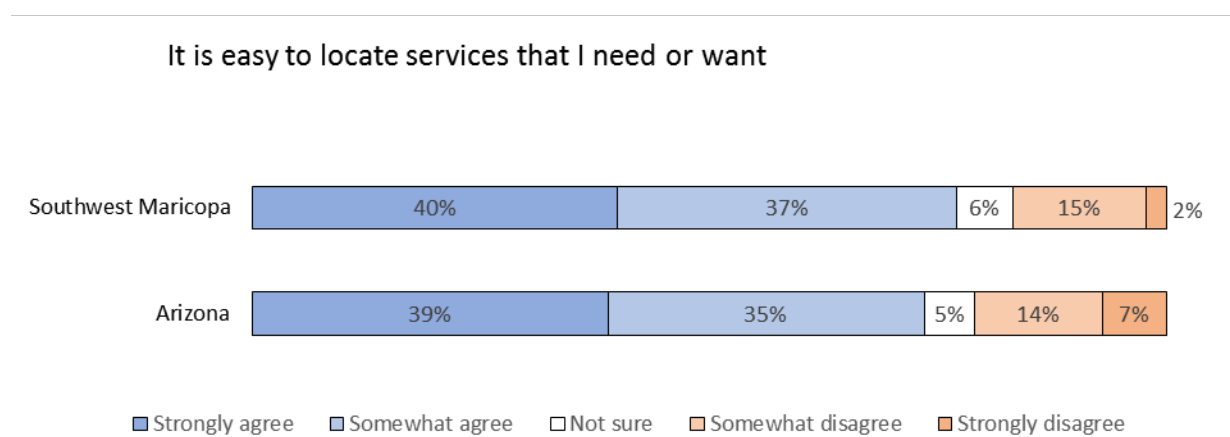
In addition to measuring parent knowledge, skills, and behaviors related to their young children, the 2012 First Things First Family and Community Survey collected data on parents’ perceptions regarding resources available to young children and their families across Arizona. Results from the survey demonstrated that residents in the Southwest Maricopa Region had similar levels of satisfaction with available information and resources, and agreement with ease of locating services, compared to the state. Forty percent of Southwest Maricopa Region respondents indicated they were “very satisfied” with “the community information and resources available to them about their children’s development and health,” compared to 39 percent of respondents across the state (see Figure 20). Seventy-seven percent of Southwest Maricopa Region respondents “strongly agreed” or “somewhat agreed” that “it is easy to locate services that I want or need,” compared to 74 percent of respondents across the state (see Figure 21).

**Figure 20. Satisfaction with information and resources (Family and Community Survey, 2012)**



Source: First Things First (2014). [2012 Family and Community Survey data]. Unpublished data.

**Figure 21. Ease of locating needed services (Family and Community Survey, 2012)**



Source: First Things First (2014). [2012 Family and Community Survey data]. Unpublished data.



## Systems Coordination among Early Childhood Programs and Services

### Why it Matters

Through system-building, First Things First is focused on developing approaches to connect various components of the early childhood system. This is done in an effort to create a more holistic system that operates to promote shared results for children and families. Agencies that work together and achieve a high level of coordination and collaboration are often easier for families to access and the services provided are more responsive to the needs of the families. Coordination efforts may also result in an increased capacity to deliver services because of the work that organizations do to identify and address 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 early childhood service delivery system that is timely, culturally responsive, family driven, community based, and directed toward enhancing children's overall development. Determining how these efforts are impacting regions and the families within them can help inform service, program and policy decisions that will benefit families and young children across the state.

### What the Data Tell Us

The Regional Councils in Maricopa County have identified cross-regional approaches to improve the coordination and integration of programs and leverage resources that enhance the ability to deliver high quality supports for young children and their families.

A county-wide home visitation coordinated referral system has been established through Parent Partners Plus providing families with a single entry point to access all home visitation programs. Parent Partners Plus assesses families' needs and refers them to the most appropriate home visitation program. This collaborative structure increases coordination among home visitation providers, limits duplication of services and improves the utilization of available resources.

More than thirty Family Resource Centers across Maricopa County provide families with young children access to training and educational opportunities, resources and links to other services. These centers have established the Family Resource Network to raise awareness of the availability of services and enhance the quality of services through a learning community of center providers. Their website, [FamilyResourceAZ.org](http://FamilyResourceAZ.org) assists families in locating a center and learning about available services.

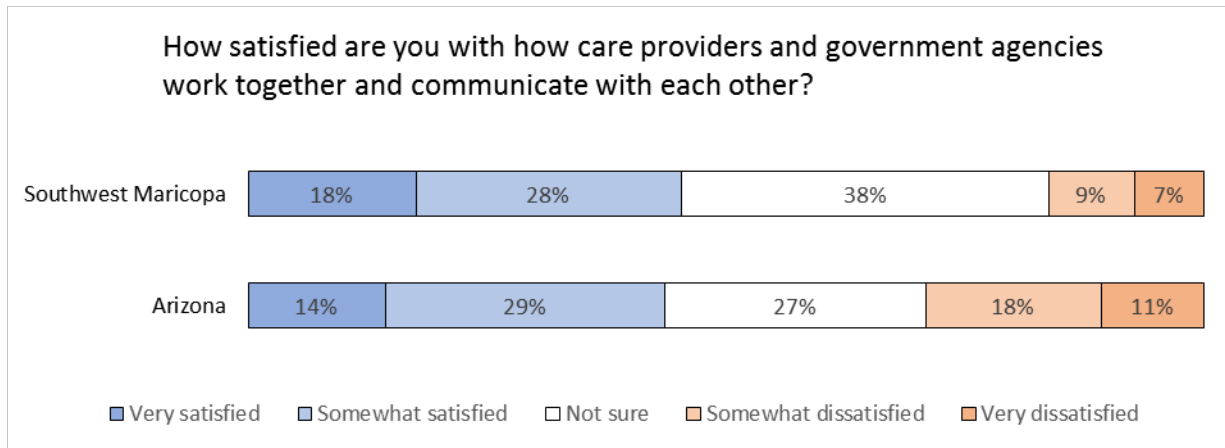
The oral health strategy is implemented under a single administrative home charged with coordination of service delivery across Maricopa County. The expected results for children are

prevention and reduction of early childhood tooth decay and reduction of the associated risks for pain and infections that can lead to lifelong complications to health and wellbeing. The program includes: oral health screening to reach over 25,000 children and 2,400 expectant mothers annually, with referrals for follow up care as needed; fluoride varnishes for children; oral health education for families and other caregivers; and outreach and education to oral health and medical professionals. The implementation includes a unique public/private partnership with key roles held by the county health department, the state health department, and a private health provider.

Under a cross-regional Service Coordination strategy, FindHelpPhx.org is set to increase awareness of resources and supports available to families with children ages 0-5 across Maricopa County. The website provides an online information and referral resource to families with young children and to agencies that provide supports and services for those families. Services available through the online resource address the social, health and early development needs of families. Design and content is monitored and developed through community input and is reviewed and updated at least annually for relevance and accuracy. The resources are primarily no- or low-cost services. Continuous outreach and training on use of the site have been integral to successful implementation and increased use of the site.

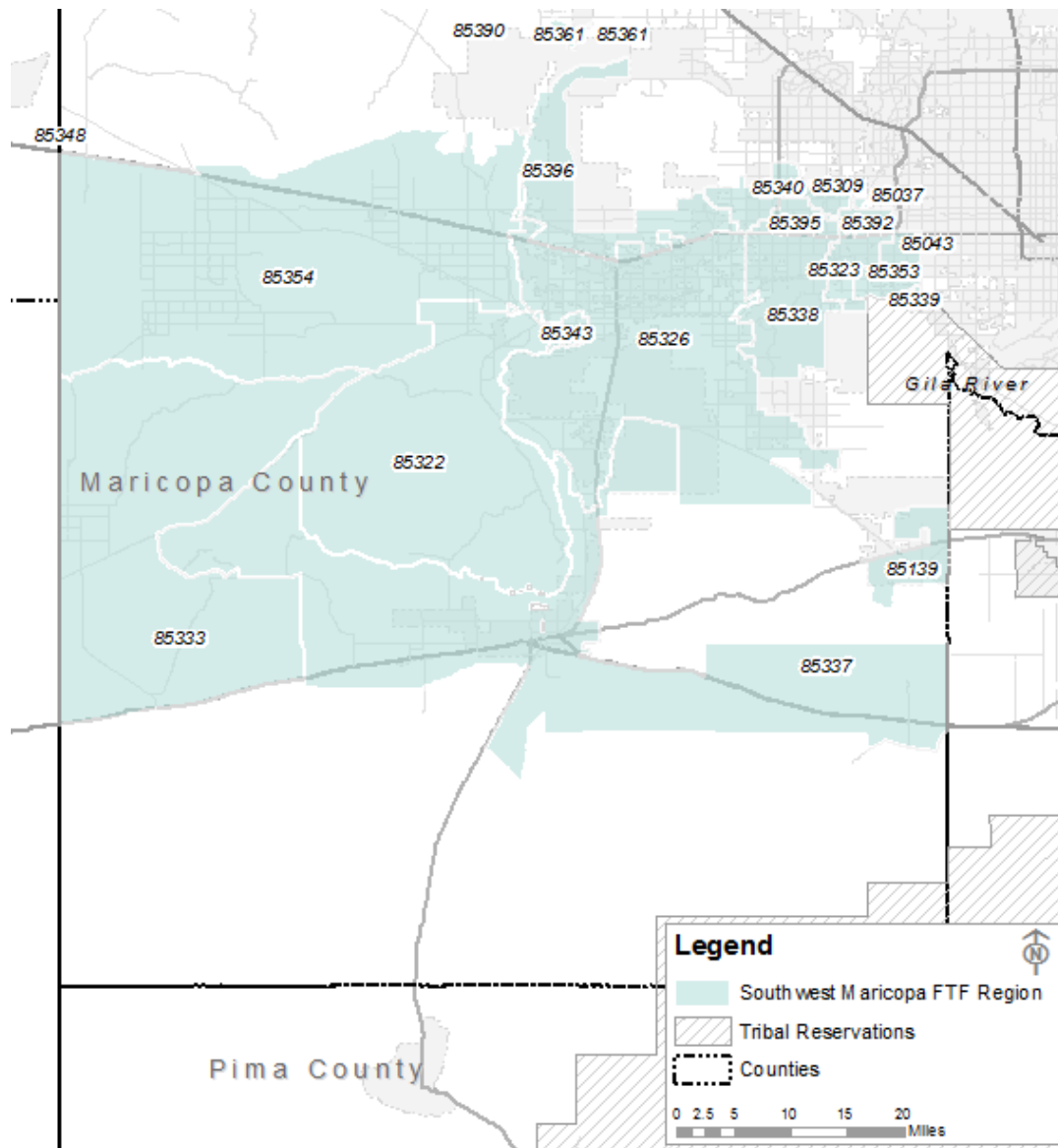
The 2012 First Things First Family and Community Survey collected data on parents' perceptions regarding how well agencies that serve young children and their families coordinate and collaborate. One item from the survey addresses the issue of perceived early childhood system coordination. Respondents in both the region and the state were more likely to indicate satisfaction (46% in the region, 43% in the state) than dissatisfaction (16% in the region, 29% in the state) with how care providers and government agencies work together and communicate (see Figure 22). A large percentage of respondents in the region also indicated they were "not sure" (38%) how satisfied they were with providers and agencies' cooperation and communication.

**Figure 22. Satisfaction with coordination and communication (Family and Community Survey, 2012)**



Source: First Things First (2014). [2012 Family and Community Survey data]. Unpublished data.

## Appendix 1: Map of zip codes of the Southwest Maricopa Region



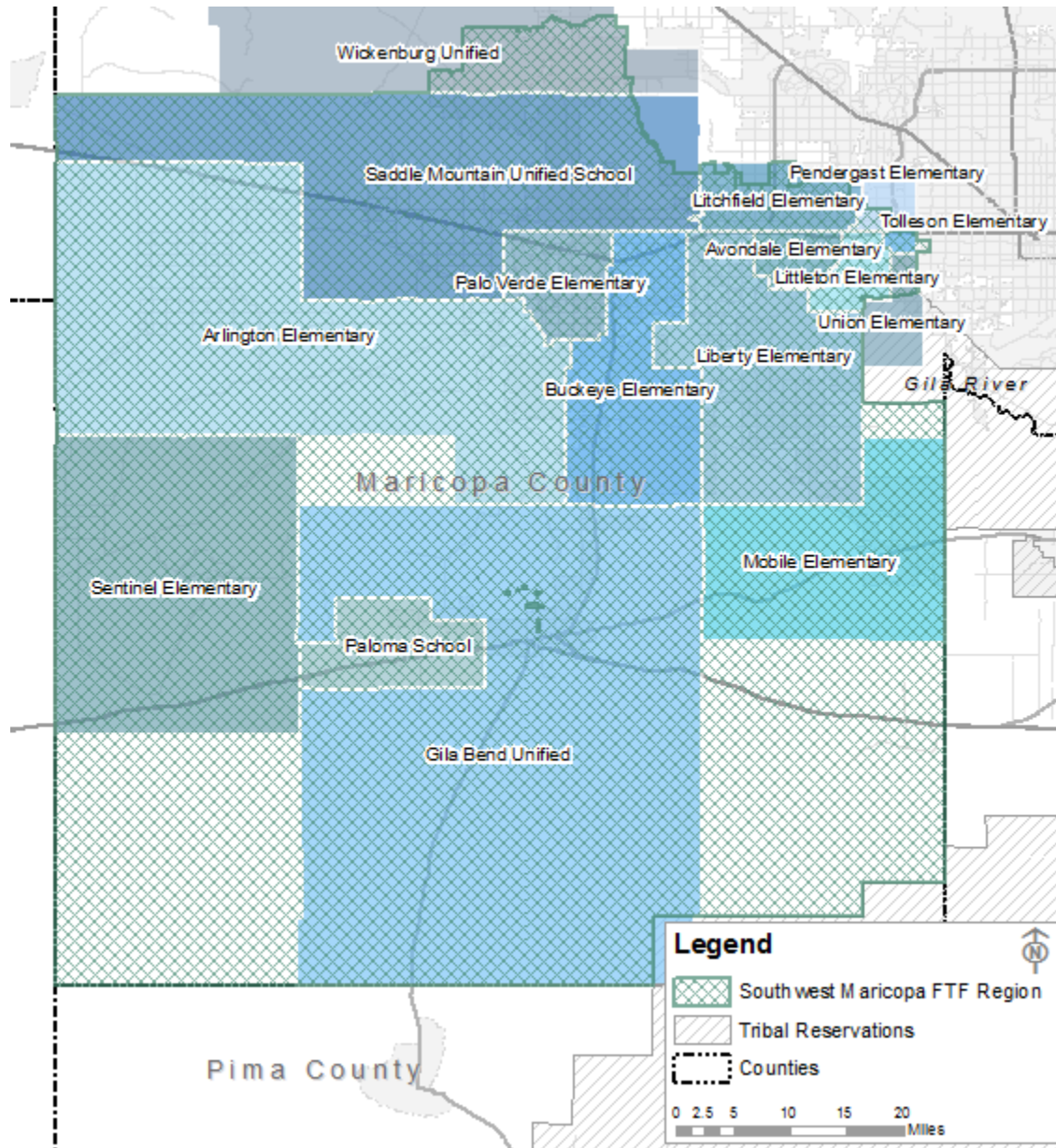
Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2010). TIGER/Line Shapefiles: ZCTAs, Counties, American Indian/Alaska Native Homelands. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/geo/maps-data/data/tiger-line.html>

## Appendix 2: Zip codes of the Southwest Maricopa 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 SOUTHWEST MARICOPA REGION	THIS ZCTA IS SHARED WITH
<b>Southwest Maricopa Region</b>	<b>273,194</b>	<b>28,512</b>	<b>83,781</b>	<b>20,142</b>		
85139	124	11	42	7	1%	Pinal
85322	752	54	253	41	100%	
85323	39,507	4,964	11,418	3,398	100%	
85326	51,705	5,535	14,237	3,825	100%	
85333	77	9	29	4	10%	Yuma
85337	2,405	261	798	180	86%	Tohono O'odham Nation
85338	41,115	4,287	13,341	3,105	100%	
85339	28	3	7	3	0.1%	Gila River Indian Community & Phoenix South
85340	26,202	2,466	8,463	1,777	99.8%	Northwest Maricopa
85343	196	13	65	8	100%	
85353	31,011	4,185	8,485	2,928	100%	
85354	6,645	577	2,160	406	100%	
85355	12	2	5	2	0.1%	Northwest Maricopa
85361	22	2	4	2	0.3%	Northwest Maricopa
85392	35,310	3,353	11,579	2,464	100%	
85395	25,922	1,624	8,704	1,166	100%	
85396	12,161	1,166	4,191	826	99.98%	Northwest Maricopa
85353	31,011	4,185	8,485	2,928	100%	
85354	6,645	577	2,160	406	100%	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2010). 2010 Decennial Census, Summary File 1, Tables P1, P14, P20.

## Appendix 3: Map of Elementary and Unified School Districts in the Southwest Maricopa Region



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2015). TIGER/Line Shapefiles: Elementary School Districts, Unified School Districts. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/geo/maps-data/data/tiger-line.html>

## Appendix 4: Data Sources

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