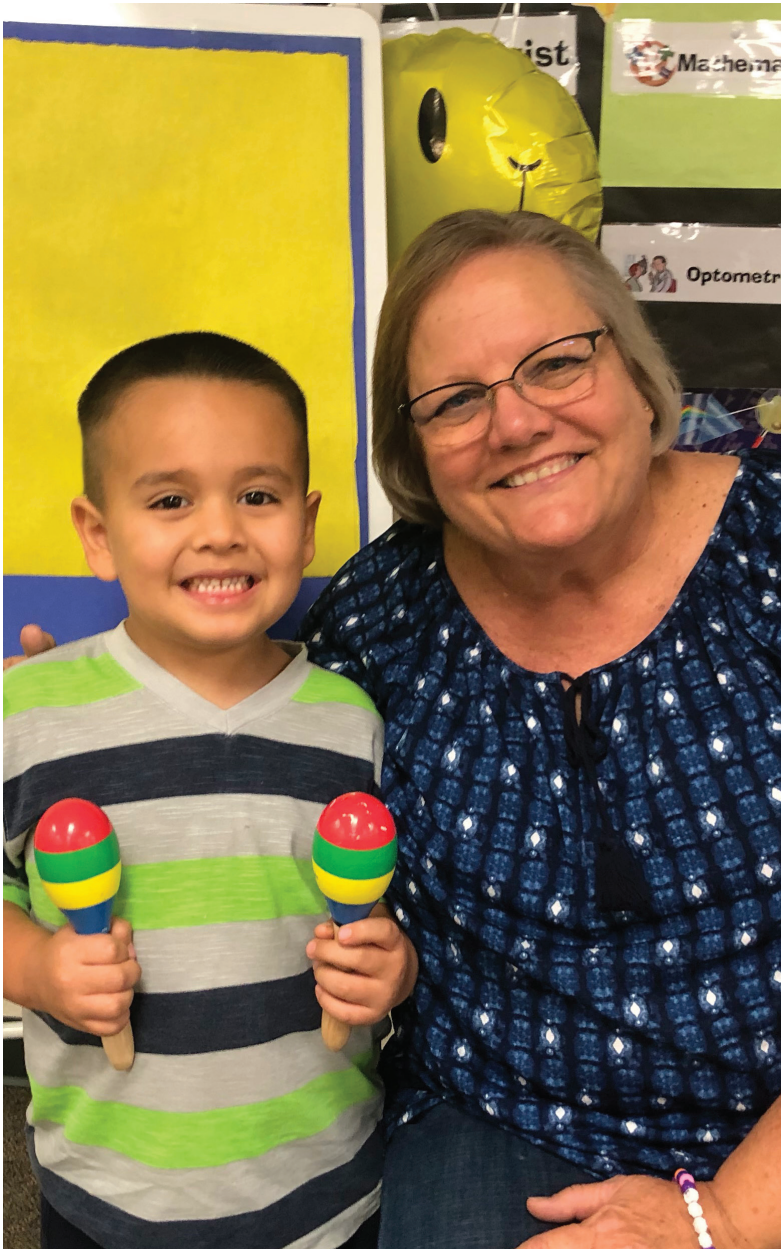


FIRST THINGS FIRST

East Maricopa Region

2022 Impact Report



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



90% of a child's brain grows before kindergarten.

Early childhood matters.

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

Many young children in Arizona face challenges that threaten their healthy development and learning. In the FTF East Maricopa Region, there are **54,701 children** (under age 6) with **14% living in poverty**.

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



I am so grateful that we are able to meet the needs of our youngest learners through our early learning programs. Each day we see the benefit of early exposure to high-quality, developmentally appropriate practices from teachers and staff, who nurture each child to reach her and his full potential every day. Partnering with parents and collaborating as a team to meet the needs of each of our kids is so rewarding and critical to a child's future success in and out of school."

Dr. Christine Bonow

*Director of Early Learning and Community Education-
Scottsdale Unified School District*

FTF East Maricopa Regional Key Impact Highlights [State Fiscal Year 2022]



Strengthening Families and Early Literacy

3,771

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

235

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



Quality Preschool and Child Care

7,895

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

467

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



Preventive Health

1,424

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

469

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

Additional Strategies

2,604

Families

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

875

Children

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



Ahwatukee boy learns to stay on track and reduce frustration at Quality First preschool

Five-year-old Thatcher has always been a kind, friendly and happy boy. But before he started preschool, his mother said his biggest challenges were focus, impulse control and transition.

Daily tasks like putting on socks and shoes and getting ready for the day could at times result in frustration for him and his mom, Tiffany Vance.

"Thatcher loves learning and socializing. He has always been the first one to help a friend, but he struggled with focus and regulation," said Vance, the mom of three. "Before starting preschool, it was difficult for him to walk from the front to the back of the classroom without distraction or disruption."

Thatcher's older brother attended Children of Hope Child Development Center in Ahwatukee and Vance was hopeful the quality preschool program would also help Thatcher develop important skills he needed to be ready for kindergarten.

Children of Hope Child Development Center's preschool participates the Quality First program, which supports early care and education programs as they help prepare children for success in kindergarten and beyond.

The First Things First East Maricopa Regional Partnership Council funds Quality First in the region to help early care and education

providers strengthen their programs through professional development and coaching, specialized assistance from a team of early childhood experts, and funding to improve facilities and learning materials.

When Thatcher started preschool at age 4, the teachers and staff understood his strengths and his challenges.

They told Vance that implementing intervention strategies like giving the young boy choices and having him sit on a wiggly seat would help him to regulate his behavior and help him focus on learning. The wiggly seat provided Thatcher with subtle movement, like gentle bouncing or rocking, without having to get up from his seat and helped with self-regulation.

Thatcher's teachers at Children of Hope were patient and positive in their approach to guiding learning experiences for him, Vance said. Over time, he flourished learning numbers and letters, while also making tangible connections and understanding.

"He learned what numbers and words represented and that led to him being more engaged and enthusiastic in his classroom setting," Vance said. "His teachers used ways to keep him focused and they understood how to keep him centered."

Thatcher has started kindergarten and although he is still developing and evolving his learned skills, he is thriving in his new class. He listens, comprehends and is adjusting to new routines.

Techniques he learned in preschool have translated to home, improving interactions with their family, Vance said. He is much better at understanding tasks and making connections on his own. He is better able to stay on track to complete everyday routines, which has helped him be less frustrated and more confident.

"His preschool teachers and the quality of his experiences were instrumental in shaping who he is today," Vance said. "He really loved his teachers, and felt so loved by them as well. Although he is a bright child, I don't think his success would be to the level it is now if it weren't for the early intervention he received at Children of Hope."



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

FTF East Maricopa Regional Partnership Council

FTF regional partnership councils are made up of volunteers who study the unique needs of the local community and inform how funds should be used to best support the healthy development and early learning of young children birth to age 5. FTF invests in proven programs

and innovative strategies through grants to community organizations that provide services to children and families. Some of the programs in this region include Healthy Families, Nurse-Family Partnership and Parents as Teachers.

FTF East Maricopa SFY22 Total Regional Program Expenditures

Quality Child Care and Preschool

\$3,697,929

Strengthening Families

\$2,344,770

Preventive Health

\$1,027,392

Research and Evaluation

\$243,928

Parent and Community Awareness

\$146,642

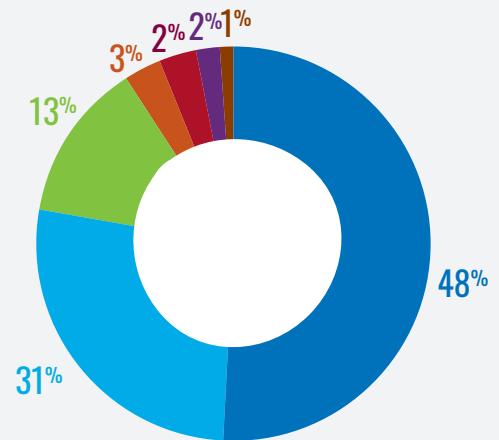
Workforce Development and Training

\$141,655

Coordination

\$55,535

Total \$7,657,850



FTF East Maricopa Regional Partnership Council and Staff

Chair

Lisa Bautista

Vice Chair

Lenay Dunn

Members

Antonio Alcala
Juan Aristizabal
Victoria Corlett
Trinity Donovan
Lynn Hockenberger

Inez Martinez
Barbara Milner
Delanyo Smith
Mitzie Warner

FTF Senior Regional Director

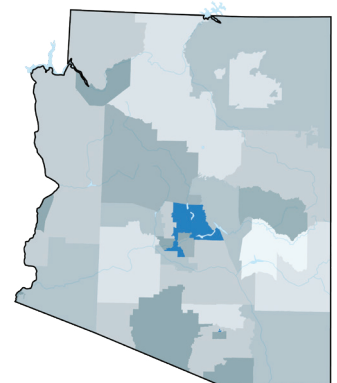
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The **FTF East Maricopa Region** lies entirely within Maricopa County and spans urban communities to the east of Phoenix as well as less densely populated, suburban and rural communities reaching towards the edges of the Maricopa County boundary. This diverse, expansive region includes: three cities — Chandler, Scottsdale and Tempe; five towns — Carefree, Cave Creek, Fountain Hills, Guadalupe and Paradise Valley; three unincorporated places — Goldfield Ranch, Rio Verde and Sun Lakes; two Phoenix neighborhoods — Ahwatukee and Paradise Valley Village; and one Indian reservation — the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation.

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