

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Hualapai Tribe 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 Hualapai Tribe Region, there are **197 children** (under age 6) with **49% living in poverty**.

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

FTF Hualapai Tribe Regional Key Impact Highlights [State Fiscal Year 2022]



Strengthening Families and Early Literacy

22

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.

80

Books distributed to provide opportunities for families and children to understand their own culture, language and connection to the tribal community.



Quality Preschool and Child Care

35

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



Preventive Health

26

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

Quality First helps Hualapai child care teachers understand the importance of interactions with children

At the Hualapai Day Care Center in Peach Springs, a main goal is to offer a quality, nurturing learning environment for children in the region.

Teachers are key to providing a positive experience that will prepare children for kindergarten and assure parents that their children are in good hands, said Chira Walema, the center's director.

To better meet the needs of young children and families from the Hualapai Tribe, the center participates in the Quality First program to help child care providers in the state improve the quality of their programs in ways that help young children be ready for kindergarten. Participating in Quality First is free for regulated child care centers, homes and preschool programs in Arizona.

“Quality First helps parents gauge if their children are in a quality child care,” Walema said.

Research shows that positive learning settings that provide quality child care in the early years – when most brain growth happens – play an important role in the healthy development of children. Through their training, the eight teachers at the Hualapai center are learning that their relationship with the children they care for is crucial in the first five years.

A Quality First coach has provided the training and offered guidance to the Hualapai teachers on powerful interactions with children.

“It's helped them understand that their interactions with the kids help their learning and development,” Walema said. “And that's been really helpful, especially in the tribal community, we're not as talkative and outgoing as if you were in a city setting.”

That aspect of the training focused on principles that encourage teachers to slow down and be intentional in their interactions with children; to acknowledge and validate the child to build trust; and to nurture relationships.

“The powerful interactions mainly talked about how during play you can interact with the kids, you can get their mind thinking more, you can ask open ended questions to help with their vocabulary and their language development, those sorts of things,” Walema said.

Teachers had a chance to put what they learned into practice while the coach observed in the classrooms.

The center also underwent a health and safety assessment as part of creating a better environment for the children.

“After the assessment was complete we were able to make the necessary changes throughout our center to improve,” she said. “Hand wash timers were implemented, Quality dollars were used to purchase step stool stairs for hand wash sinks in classrooms to be utilized for meal times,” she said. Helmets also were added to bicycles.

The trainings also help with goal setting and changes that will ultimately benefit the children, Walema said.

“It's a positive impact on them, it helps prepare them for school, it helps their social interaction, all of those things,” she said..



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

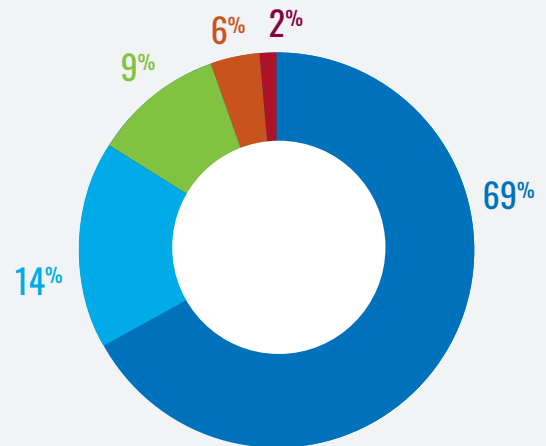
FTF Hualapai Tribe Regional Partnership Council

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 Hualapai Home Visitation, Read On Hualapai and Service Coordination.

FTF Hualapai Tribe SFY22 Total Regional Program Expenditures

Strengthening Families	\$95,012
Quality Child Care and Preschool	\$19,309
Coordination	\$11,915
Preventive Health	\$8,242
Research and Evaluation	\$3,357
Total	\$137,835



FTF Hualapai Tribe Regional Partnership Council and Staff

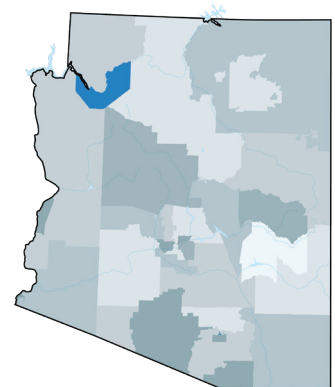
Chair
William Santiago

Vice Chair
Heather Nieto

FTF Regional Director
Tara Gene
TGene@FirstThingsFirst.org
928.854.8732

Members
Jane Baumbach
Renee Beecher
Omaovensi Coochwyetewa
Wanda Quasula

Amelia Sullivan
Pearl Sullivan
Chira Walema



*The boundaries of the **FTF Hualapai Tribe Region** are the same as those of the Hualapai Indian Reservation. Although the reservation includes lands in Coconino and Yavapai counties, most of the population live in or near Peach Springs in Mohave County. Separate pieces of the reservation lie to the south of Peach Springs, near Valentine and Wikieup.*

Learn more at
[FirstThingsFirst.org/Regions/Hualapai-Tribe](https://www.FirstThingsFirst.org/Regions/Hualapai-Tribe)