

FIRST THINGS FIRST

White Mountain Apache 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 White Mountain Apache Tribe Region, there are **2,003 children** (under age 6) with **54% living in poverty**.

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

“As a member of the White Mountain Apache Community, I support early childhood because it's an investment in our future. When we help build strong, healthy children they will raise strong, healthy families, who will build strong, healthy communities.”



Dawnafe Whitesinger

Vice Chair of FTF White Mountain Apache Tribe Regional Partnership Council

FTF White Mountain Apache Tribe Regional Key Impact Highlights [State Fiscal Year 2022]

Strengthening Families and Early Literacy

46 Adults attended parenting activities to learn more about the importance of early childhood development.

1,818 Resources were distributed to adults for connecting parents with parenting tips, services and programs.

Quality Preschool and Child Care

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

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

11 Early childhood educators received college scholarships to improve their qualifications for working with infants, toddlers and preschoolers.

Additional Strategies

1,464 Books were given to parents and caregivers of infants, toddlers and preschoolers through a local distribution program.



Whiteriver toddler benefits from parenting tips her mother received in home visits

When Yolanda Harina of Whiteriver adopted a little girl last fall, she decided it would be a good idea to freshen up her parenting skills. The child she was raising was already a teenager, so it had been years since she had a toddler at home.

“My son is 15 years old, so there’s a large gap,” she said.

When she learned about Parents as Teachers, a home visitation program that provides in-home parent coaching through Arizona’s Children Association, she immediately enrolled. The program, which is funded by the First Things First White Mountain Apache Tribe Regional Partnership Council, provides a parent educator who makes home visits twice a month to work alongside parents on child development, nutrition, age-appropriate communication and discipline techniques.

“The parents set goals, some of them may need help with temper tantrums, or potty training or whatever aspect of child development that they want more information about or assistance with,” said Claude Endfield, a parent educator.

While the program continues to enroll families, the association brings together families for child development learning and socialization at monthly gatherings known as Group Connections.

“Parents come and get basic information on different aspects of child development and then we have activities for them to do with the children they have with them,” Endfield said.

Harina and her 3-year-old daughter, Joslyn, have attended those meetings. The toddler has enjoyed the children’s activities offered, as well as being around other youngsters – and she has been especially fascinated with books, her mother said.

In fact, Harina said, books are helping her daughter come out of her shell. “When I first adopted her, she was shy and scared. She wouldn’t talk, she would just babble.”

But in the months since Joslyn became a member of the family, her mother has noticed a gradual transformation. Harina credits the parenting tips she’s picked up so far. She reads books, including culturally-appropriate ones that Endfield has provided, for at least 20 minutes daily to her daughter, a routine activity that she can already see is making a difference in her child’s development.

“I read to her every night and show her pictures of animals and optics in the book,” the mother said. “Now she’s talking a lot more.”

Studies show that children whose parents and caregivers regularly read to them in the early years — when the brain develops rapidly — help them become better readers who do well in school. Given the developmental strides that Joslyn, now a preschooler, has made so far, Harina is certain that Joslyn will have the skills needed to succeed in kindergarten.

In the meantime, she’ll continue “learning her colors, counting her numbers to 10 and singing songs,” her mother said.



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

FTF White Mountain Apache 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 Parents as Teachers, Parenting Counts Workshops and Kith and Kin.

FTF White Mountain Apache Tribe SFY22 Total Regional Program Expenditures

Quality Child Care and Preschool

\$404,852

Preventive Health

\$216,257

Strengthening Families

\$119,186

Workforce Development and Training

\$30,993

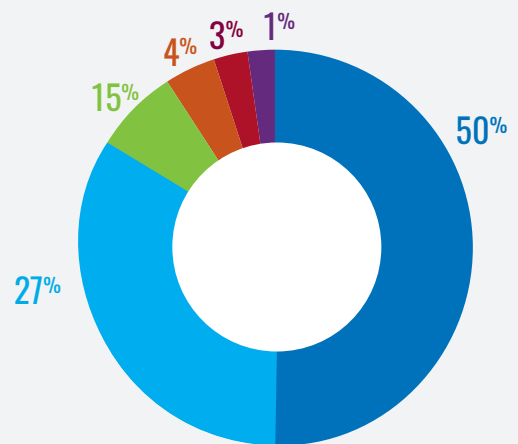
Research and Evaluation

\$23,238

Parent and Community Awareness

\$6,094

Total \$800,350



FTF White Mountain Apache Tribe Regional Partnership Council and Staff

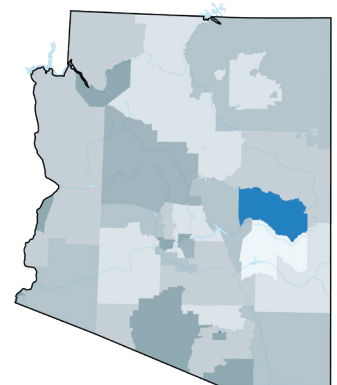
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The boundaries of the FTF White Mountain Apache Tribe Region are the same as the White Mountain Apache Reservation (sometimes called Fort Apache). The region covers more than 2,500 square miles in Apache, Gila and Navajo counties. The larger communities in the region are Whiteriver, Cibecue, North Fork and Canyon Day.

Learn more at
[FirstThingsFirst.org/Regions/White-Mountain-Apache-Tribe](https://www.firstthingsfirst.org/Regions/White-Mountain-Apache-Tribe)