

From birth to age 5, a child's brain grows more than at any other time in life. And research shows that the quality of a child's experiences in the early childhood years helps shape how their brain develops.

Created by Arizonans, First Things First partners with families and communities to improve the early learning, health and development of our state's youngest children so they are ready for success in kindergarten and beyond.

With statewide oversight and accountability, decisions are made at the local level about how to invest funds from tobacco revenues dedicated to early childhood programs and services. Community leaders rely on data and invest in proven programs and innovative strategies.



90% of brain growth happens before kindergarten.



## Three main areas of focus for First Things First

### 1 Early Learning

Improving and expanding access to quality early care and education.

#### Quality First:

First Things First's signature program, Quality First, partners with child care and preschool providers to improve the quality of early learning across Arizona. Scholarships also are funded to help more infants, toddlers and preschoolers access quality early care and learning.

Learn more at [QualityFirstAZ.com](http://QualityFirstAZ.com)



**46,082**

young children received their early education from child care and preschool providers participating in Quality First in SFY21.



**5,920**

young children from low-income families received a quality early education with the help of a Quality First preschool or child care scholarship in SFY21.

## 2 Strong Families

Strengthening families in their role as their child's first teacher.

**Funded programs:** FTF supports families as they nurture and teach their children by providing voluntary health and education services in their homes and communities. These include home visitation programs, parenting education and family resource centers.

**Parent Kit:** Our Arizona Parent Kit, offered free to the parents of every Arizona newborn before they leave the hospital, is filled with simple, user-friendly resources that help parents through their most difficult questions or challenges.

Learn more at [FirstThingsFirst.org/resources/parent-kit/](https://www.firstthingsfirst.org/resources/parent-kit/)

**48,384**

kits containing tools to help support children's health and learning were given to families of newborns leaving the hospital in SFY21.

**4,669**

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

## 3 Preventive Health

Prevent and identify health problems that can impact learning later on.

**Screenings:** First Things First supports healthier kids by funding preventive developmental, health and sensory screenings, and then providing referrals for existing services to support children's development.

**17,491**

children received screenings to detect vision, hearing and developmental issues and prevent learning challenges later on.

**3,765**

referrals were provided to further assess children for developmental delays/sensory issues and possible treatment or early intervention services in SFY21.

\* All numbers from fiscal year 2021

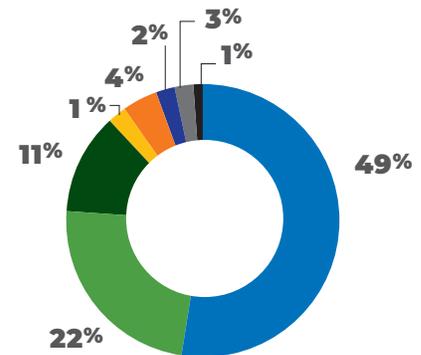
## Accountability

FTF monitors the impact of its programs and services:

- **Grantee Accountability** - each grantee must provide information detailing specifics about their work.
- **Programmatic Accountability** - Programs at FTF are evaluated on whether the services provided are achieving the desired result in that area.
- **Statewide Accountability** - Statewide studies determine whether the services funded by FTF collectively are resulting in children arriving at school healthier and ready to succeed.

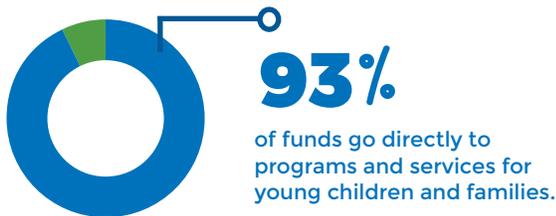
Learn more about First Things First strategies and impact at [FirstThingsFirst.org/reports](https://www.firstthingsfirst.org/reports).

## Investments Across Arizona



### Priority Funding Areas

- Quality Child Care & Preschool
- Strengthening Families
- Preventive Health
- Other programmatic expenditures (Grants, Gifts & Donations)
- Workforce Development & Training
- Family/Community Engagement
- Research & Evaluation
- System Coordination



- Administration
- Programs & Services



**Find FTF Programs** Parents and caregivers can find resources in their area by visiting [FirstThingsFirst.org](https://www.firstthingsfirst.org).