

## FIRST THINGS FIRST EXTERNAL EVALUATION

### Overview

The external evaluation of Arizona's First Things First (FTF) initiative is designed to determine how FTF programs and investments into the early childhood delivery system statewide affect children's health and readiness for school. The evaluation will consist of two studies. The first is an accelerated longitudinal study of 8,500 infants, three-year-olds and five year olds. This study will allow us to determine how FTF initiatives affect children's health and readiness to succeed over time. The second study examines five succeeding kindergarten cohorts that will provide community stakeholders with a yearly snapshot of children's health status and readiness at kindergarten entry (n =1,200 per year). Both studies are slated to begin in the fall of 2009.

The evaluation team has identified five key indicators that are predictive of children's health and readiness to succeed at kindergarten entry. These indicators are based on the Arizona Early Learning Standards and include the following five domains of development:

- Health and Physical Development
- Social and Emotional Development
- Approaches Toward Learning
- Language Development and Communication
- Cognition and General Knowledge

Several measures will be used to determine children's development in each domain (see attached list of child measures). Measurement instruments include direct child assessment, naturalistic observation, parent report, and in cases where children are cared for outside the home, teacher report. The recommended measures were selected after careful consideration of the following:

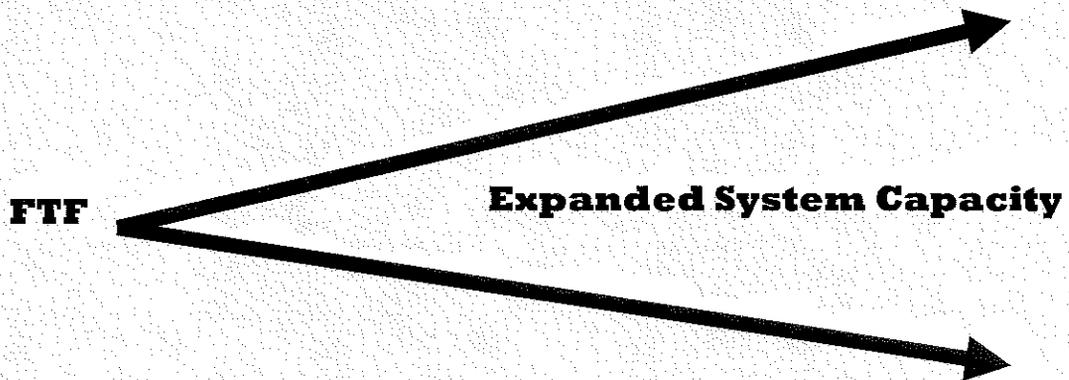
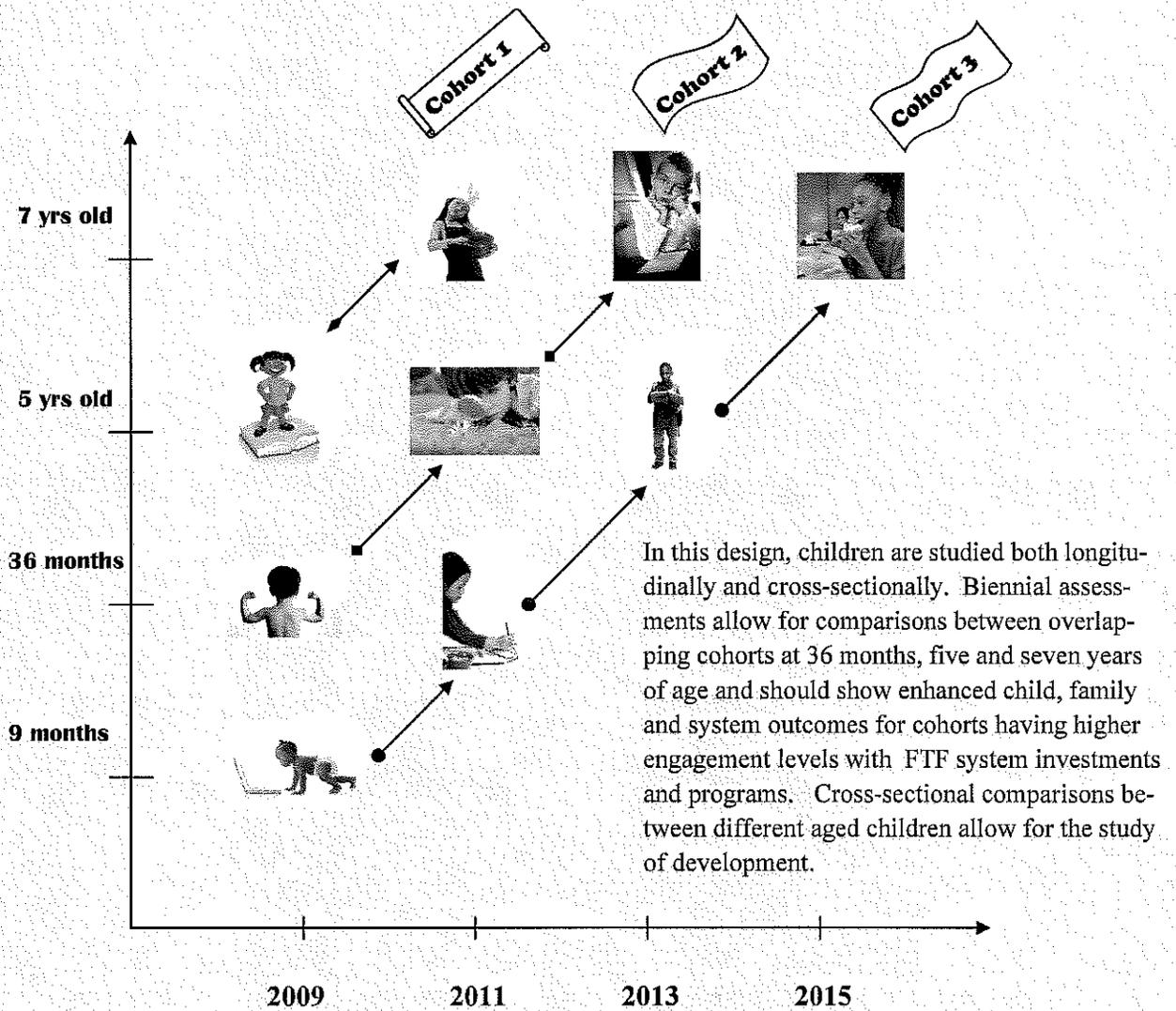
- Data source (child, parent or teacher)
- Administration time
- Cultural sensitivity/bias
- Face validity
- Rating of the assessment by outside experts (recognition in the field)
- Ease of administration
- Ease of data transfer

Child assessment and parent interviews will be conducted in the child's home or other location as determined by the child's primary caregiver. Data collectors will be recruited from local communities and will receive intensive training on all instruments used in the study. Parent interviews will be conducted during the first part of the home visit to allow children time to become comfortable with the data collector. When data collectors complete direct child assessments, parents will complete a measure of children's social emotional development.

#### *Next Steps*

We are currently working on a multi-stage sampling strategy to assure that children and families enrolled in the study are geographically dispersed across the state and reflect Arizona's diverse population. We plan to finalize the design and develop a training protocol for data collectors to be done during the summer. We also are working with other stakeholders to build connectivity throughout the early childhood delivery system to enhance resources and access to services for Arizona's children. A current example is working with the ADE effort to create an identifier for all participants in the early childhood system.

# FTFEE Cohort-Sequential Design



FTFEE design illustration presented at meeting of Tribal representatives, May 12, 2009, Phoenix, AZ

## First Things First External Evaluation

### Child Measures -- Readiness Study

DOMAINS TO BE ASSESSED	Five-Year-Old Cohort (60 months) Fall Administration
<b>Social Emotional Development</b>	<p>Devereux Pre-K (DECA-Pre-K)(parent report—36 items)</p> <p><b>Sub-scales:</b> Attachment/Relationships (e.g., interacts with others) Initiative (e.g., plays with other children) Self-Control (e.g., shows patience)</p>
<b>Adaptive Domain</b> (self-care and personal responsibility)	Battelle (screening instrument; 20-30 minutes). Combination of direct child measure, naturalistic observation, and parent interview
<b>Personal-Social Domain</b> (expression of feelings, self concept, peer and adult interacting coping, social role)	Battelle
<b>Motor Development</b> (Gross motor, fine motor and perceptual motor)	Battelle
<b>Communication Domain</b> (Expressive and Receptive Communication)	Battelle
<b>Cognitive Development</b> (Attention and Memory; Reasoning and Academic Skills; Perception and Concepts)	Battelle
<b>Literacy</b> (Name writing, alphabet knowledge, beginning sound awareness, print and word awareness, rhyme awareness)	PALS-K (30 minutes)
<b>Numeracy/Mathematics</b>	Research-based Mathematics Assessment (REMA)
<b>Health</b> (prenatal care, well-child visits, health insurance, oral and physical health, safety practices, etc)	Parent Interview
<b>Social, emotional, physical, emergent literacy and mathematics, and approaches to learning</b>	Teacher Report –Piloted summer 09.

**FIRST THINGS FIRST EXTERNAL EVALUATION**  
**Child Measures -- Longitudinal Study**

DOMAINS TO BE ASSESSED	Infant Cohort (9 months) Fall	Three-Year-Old Cohort (36 months) Spring	Five-Year-Old Cohort (60 months) Fall
<b>Social Emotional Development</b>	Devereux Infant (DECA-I) (parent report—33 items) <b>Sub-scales:</b> Attachment/Relationships (e.g., calms down with familiar adult) Initiative (e.g., shows interest in what adults are doing)	Devereux Toddler (DECA-T) (parent report—36 items) <b>Sub-scales:</b> Attachment/Relationships (e.g., interacts with others) Initiative (e.g., plays with other children) Self-Control (e.g., shows patience)	Devereux Pre-K (DECA-Pre-K) (parent report—36 items) <b>Sub-scales:</b> Attachment/Relationships Initiative Self-Control
<b>Adaptive Domain</b> (self-care and personal responsibility)	Battelle (screening instrument; 10-15 minutes). Combination of direct child measure, observation, and parent interview	Battelle (screening instrument; 20-30 minutes). Combination of direct child measure, naturalistic observation, and parent interview	Battelle (screening instrument; 20-30 minutes). Combination of direct child measure, naturalistic observation, and parent interview
<b>Personal-Social Domain</b> (expression of feelings, self concept, peer and adult interacting coping, social role)	Battelle	Battelle	Battelle
<b>Motor Development</b> (Gross motor, fine motor and perceptual motor)	Battelle	Battelle	Battelle
<b>Communication Domain</b> (Expressive and Receptive Communication)	Battelle	Battelle	Battelle
<b>Cognitive Development</b> (Attention and Memory; Reasoning and Academic Skills; Perception and Concepts)	Battelle	Battelle	Battelle
<b>Literacy</b> (Name writing, alphabet knowledge, beginning sound awareness, print and word awareness, rhyme awareness)		PALS-Pre-K (30 minutes)	PALS-K (30 minutes)
<b>Mathematics</b> number sense, geometry, measurement, and patterning		Research-based Mathematics Assessment (REMA) (10-30 minutes)	Research-based Mathematics Assessment (REMA) (10-30 minutes)
<b>Health</b> (prenatal care, well-child visits, health insurance, oral and physical health, safety practices, etc)	Parent Interview	Parent Interview	Parent Interview