

# # FIRST THINGS FIRST

Graham/Greenlee



2015 IMPACT REPORT

# SCHOOL SUCCESS BEGINS AT BIRTH



## 90% OF A CHILD'S CRITICAL BRAIN DEVELOPMENT HAPPENS BEFORE KINDERGARTEN,

so early experiences lay the foundation for success in school and in life. Arizonans created First Things First (FTF) to give more children the tools they need to arrive at school prepared to meet our state's high expectations. FTF provides resources and professional expertise then combines it with local decision-making to build on the work of community organizations impacting children and families. Local volunteers – parents, educators, business professionals, philanthropists, faith leaders and tribal representatives – decide how the funds will be used to best improve school readiness for children in their area.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD IS ONE OF THE BEST INVESTMENTS A STATE CAN MAKE

Research by Nobel Prize-winning economist James Heckman showed that every \$1 invested in early childhood can yield returns between \$4 and \$16. Early literacy and its impact on school success is one of the best examples of the return on investment in early childhood. High quality early learning experiences, rich in language and literacy, reduce early learning gaps and ensure that children are ready to start reading when they enter kindergarten.



Gaps in children's vocabulary start to appear as early as **18 MONTHS.**



By the time children are **3 & 4 YEARS OLD,** their vocabulary, attention and general knowledge are predictors of **THIRD & FOURTH GRADE** reading comprehension.



**THIRD GRADE** reading ability is one of the best predictors of **HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION.**



As an early childhood system partner, First Things First invests in proven programs and innovative strategies that: strengthen families in their role as their child's first teacher; improve the quality of early learning environments like preschool and child care, and expand access to those programs; and, promote prevention and early identification of health problems that could impact learning later on. By getting more Arizona kids ready for school, FTF helps put children on a path to academic success that benefits them, our communities and our state.

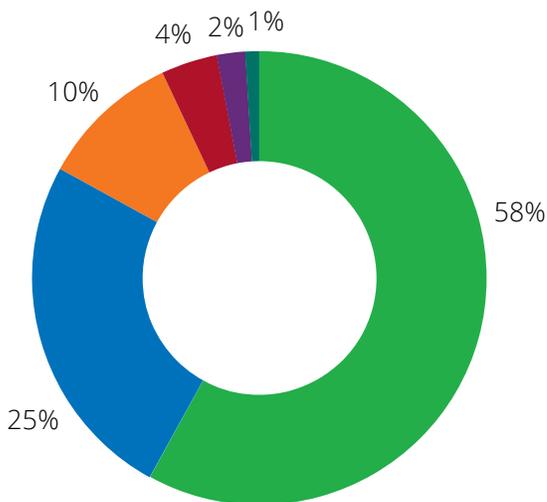
# \$1



INVESTED IN EARLY CHILDHOOD YIELDS UP TO A **\$16 RETURN**

# FISCAL YEAR 2015 IMPACT

## GRAHAM/GREENLEE FY2015 PROGRAM EXPENDITURES



- **Quality Preschool and Child Care \$549,895.43**  
 Children exposed to high quality early learning do better in school and are more likely to graduate.
- **Strengthening Families and Early Literacy \$239,237.39**  
 Families are a child's first and best teachers.
- **Preventive Health \$92,383.18**  
 Undetected or untreated health issues can impact learning later on.
- **Parent and Community Awareness \$35,330.88**  
 We all have a shared responsibility to help children arrive at school prepared to succeed.
- **Research and Accountability \$15,080.96**  
 Measuring effectiveness and promoting continuous quality improvement rely on robust, accurate data.
- **Workforce Development and Training \$11,162.27**  
 A child's relationships with early caregivers impact whether her brain will develop in ways that promote learning.

**Total = \$943,090.11**

- 📖 **308** Children had access to a higher standard of early learning through preschool and child care programs participating in Quality First.
- 📖 **133** Infants, toddlers and preschoolers received scholarships to access high quality early learning through preschool or child care.
- 👨👩👧 **21** Families received voluntary in-home visits from trained providers to enhance their parenting skills and deal with specific challenges, including first-time parenting, parenting a child with special needs, or dealing with multiple births.
- 👨👩👧 **714** Families of newborns left the hospital with tools to help them support their child's health and learning.
- 👨👩👧 **2,922** Parents and other caregivers attended community-based classes on early literacy.
- 👨👩👧 **28,336** Books getting into the homes of infants, toddlers and preschoolers through a home distribution program.
- 👩⚕️ **283** Fluoride varnishes applied to protect against dental decay.
- 👩⚕️ **22** Screenings completed to detect vision, hearing and developmental issues in young kids and prevent learning challenges later on.

# INVESTING IN SCHOOL READINESS



## EARLY LITERACY PROGRAMS PREPARE SAFFORD KINDERGARTNER FOR SUCCESS

Stacy Broman-McAdams was new to the Safford community when she first saw an ad for Toddler Story Time at the Safford Library.

Broman-McAdams, an experienced elementary school teacher, knew the importance of early care and education and thought this would be an ideal opportunity for socialization for herself and for her baby Rylee.

"We made it our routine," Broman-McAdams said. "She loved her weekly crafts. Then, we'd venture into the library to check out books. Reading at home became a family affair."

Rylee attended Toddler Time and, eventually, Preschool Story Time on a regular basis until it was time to enter kindergarten. The story times typically included reading a children's book out loud and working on an activity, such as an art project or putting together a puzzle. These activities helped the toddler develop fine and gross motor skills, learn songs and the alphabet and develop her counting skills.

Rylee's home library was expanded through an additional FTF-funded program, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, which mails a developmentally appropriate children's book to the home each month until the child turns 6.

"This was the beginning of our children's home library," Broman-McAdams said.

Now in kindergarten, Rylee's teacher confirmed what the family had planned.

"Rylee is beyond ready," said her teacher Mrs. Evans. "She is already a reader. You can tell her parents were active in her preschool education. She knows her colors and sight words. She always finishes her lessons early. I need some early finisher tubs for her. She is also very social and enjoys helping others."

## GRAHAM/GREENLEE REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL

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## FUNDED PARTNERS - FY2015

American Academy of Pediatrics - AZ Chapter  
Arizona Department of Economic Security  
Child and Family Resources Inc.  
Graham County Interfaith Care Alliance, Inc.  
Maricopa County Department of Public Health  
Pima County Health Department

Safford City-Graham County Library  
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