



FIRST THINGS FIRST

ARIZONA EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT & HEALTH BOARD PHOENIX SOUTH REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL Meeting Minutes

DRAFT

Call to Order & Roll Call

A regular meeting of the First Things First (FTF) Phoenix South Regional Partnership Council meeting was held on Thursday, May 8, 2025 in the Pulliam Auditorium at Burton Barr, 1221 N Central Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85004.

Chair Neff called the meeting to order at 9:23 a.m.

Members Present

Patricia Neff, Chair
Joyce Medina Harper, Vice Chair
Jessica Jarvi
Patty Merk
Lenny Reel
Karen Stewart (via Zoom)
Carolyn Willmer

Members Absent

Joshua Henry
Chesa Mendez

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

Chair Neff asked the regional council members if they had any conflicts of interest with any items on the agenda. Member Reel stated he had a conflict on agenda item #7, Inclusion of Children with Special Needs. Member Merk stated she had a conflict on agenda item #7, Family Resource Centers.

Call to the Public

There were no calls to the public.

Community Builder Activity

Chair Neff facilitated a community builder activity by asking the regional council members to share one word that describes how they're feeling about the future of early childhood in the Phoenix South region and to briefly explain why they chose that word.

Approval of March 28, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Chair Neff called for a motion to approve the March 28, 2025 meeting minutes. Member Jarvi so moved, with Member Willmer seconding. Motion approved 7-0-0.

SFY25 Strategy Implementation Quarter 2 Data

Regional Director Moore presented the State Fiscal Year 2025 (SFY25) mid-year data, which included statewide strategies. She discussed the contracted service units, actual service units, the regional allocation amount and percent expended year to date. She also shared program narrative report highlights.

The regional council members discussed the mid-year data and asked follow-up questions. Regional Director Moore provided answers to their questions.

SFY26 Contract Renewal Recommendations

Member Merk moved to approve the grantee contract renewal for SFY26 as presented in the Phoenix South Grantee Renewal

Worksheet for the Inclusion of Children with Special Needs strategy. Member Willmer seconded. Motion approved 6-0-0, with Member Reel not voting due to a conflict of interest.

Member Willmer moved to approve the grantee contract renewal for SFY26 as presented in the Phoenix South Grantee Renewal Worksheet for the Family Resource Centers strategy. Member Medina Harper seconded. Motion approved 6-0-0, with Member Merk not voting due to a conflict of interest.

Member Reel moved to approve the grantee contract renewals for SFY26 as presented in the Phoenix South Grantee Renewal Worksheet, for the following strategies: Developmental and Sensory Screening; Family Support for Children with Developmental Concerns; Community Based Language and Literacy; Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care; Home Visitation; Home Visitation Coordinated Referral System; Partnering with Child Welfare Systems. Member Willmer seconded. Motion approved 7-0-0.

Advocacy Efforts

Vice Chair Medina Harper led a discussion with the regional council on how to raise awareness about critical issues affecting young children and how to support preschool programs in the community. She addressed the ongoing challenges preschool programs face in securing adequate funding and noted that this issue is likely to become even more pressing in the future. She proposed ideas including collaboration among different regional councils and exploring if there are any potential funding opportunities through FTF. Additional suggestions from other regional council members included organizing a phone campaign and connecting regional council members across different regions based on their seat categories.

Senior Regional Director Sutfin shared that a specific preschool program had reached out to FTF directly for support. She committed to discussing the request internally to assess how FTF might be able to assist and will follow up with the regional council. She also clarified that any public statements on behalf of the regional council would require involvement from the state Board. Furthermore, she explained that any gathering of six or more council members would create a quorum and thus be subject to Open Meeting Law.

The regional council also discussed the proposed federal funding cuts in Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Head Start and other programs that will impact children and families.

Regional Director Report

Regional Director Moore shared that the strategic planning committee for the FTF state Board recently reviewed the feedback regarding regional boundary considerations and has decided to postpone any decisions about boundary changes until January, 2028 to allow for more thorough research and analysis.

She also provided an update on the Arizona House Bill 2778. She reminded the regional council that the bill aimed to expand the luxury tax on tobacco products to include nicotine and vapor products, with the generated revenue intended to support and enhance the early childhood system across Arizona. She noted that although the bill did not advance during this legislative session, FTF successfully raised awareness among policymakers, business leaders, community advocates, and the public about the critical importance of high-quality early childhood programs in Arizona. She then shared a link with the regional council that offers helpful resources and tips on additional ways to being an early childhood advocate.

Regional Director Moore also shared that on Wednesday, April 30th, the Grantee Roundtable event brought together grantees from across Maricopa County, including those from Phoenix North, Phoenix South, Gila River Indian Community (GRIC), Southeast Maricopa, East Maricopa, Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, Northwest Maricopa, and Southwest Maricopa. She discussed how attendees had the opportunity to network, engage in the art of storytelling, and hear recorded thank-you messages from each regional partnership council.

Additionally, she mentioned that the Phoenix/GRIC Tri-Council Retreat will take place from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 7 at the Children's Museum of Phoenix. She noted that the planning committee is putting the finishing touches on the agenda, and that the regional council can expect a "Save the Date" email soon.

Furthermore, Regional Director Moore stated that there are currently prospective council members identified to fill the school administrator and health care seats. She shared that Member Joshua Henry who held the parent representative seat has

resigned and asked the regional council members to please share any recommendations they may have for individuals to fill the seat.

Regional Director Moore concluded her report by recognizing and celebrating all the incredible mothers, grandmothers, bonus moms, aunties, and mother figures who pour so much love, strength, and care into the lives of others. Also, in honor of April as Volunteer Appreciation Month, and in the absence of an April meeting, she expressed her gratitude to the regional council members for volunteering their time and for their dedication and commitment to early childhood education. The regional council members were also presented with gifts.

Adoption of SFY26 Meeting Schedule

Chair Neff made a motion to approve the State Fiscal Year (SFY26) meeting schedule. Member Willmer seconded. Motion approved 7-0-0.

Council Member Stories

Chair Neff noted that this agenda item would be deferred at this meeting and continued at the next meeting.

Current Event Announcements & Future Agenda Item Requests

Member Medina Harper shared that the Dougherty Foundation Scholarship application is open and the deadline is Friday, June 6. She shared that is available to all types of students and that there is no minimum grade point average (GPA) required. She noted that the only requirements are that a student has graduated from Arizona high school or has been living in Arizona for the past three years and will be attending college in Arizona. She also mentioned that recipients receive \$1,000 if attending a community college and \$2,000 if enrolled at a university, with the award renewable for up to five years.

Next Meeting

Chair Neff reminded the council members that the next meeting will be held at Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church at 9:15 a.m. on Thursday, June 12, 2025.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:34 a.m.

Partnering with the Child Welfare System (Court Teams)

FTF Strategic Plan Desired Outcome:

Coordinated, Integrated and Comprehensive System

Priority Strategy Area:

Children's Health Systems Change

Project Purpose and Goals:

The intent of this strategy is to support activities that benefit both the families of young children involved in the child welfare system and the professionals who serve them. The following are desired outcomes:

- Improving systemic efforts that support children and families by addressing systems gaps, reducing disparities and creating improvement through new policies and the use of evidenced-based practices.
- Decreasing the time frames to permanency for dependent children ages birth to 3.
- Professional development and education for Judges, attorneys, community agencies and stakeholders in child welfare connected to the Maricopa County court team.
- Support of the Superior Court of Arizona in the implementation of Cradle to Crayons.
- Advocate for communities, agencies and families to collaborate in order to understand, assess and meet the needs of young children through the lens of trauma and promote growth, healing and safety.
- Foster partnerships within the child welfare community to increase collaboration and reduce silos to promote timely access to high quality, individualized services for families.

Progress to Date:

The Partnering with Child Welfare Systems Change Strategy grant partner, Maricopa County Juvenile Court, has accomplished the following in the first two quarters of State Fiscal Year 2025.

- Ongoing training of clinician teams. The first 18-month Child Parent Psychotherapy (CPP) training cohort of 14 therapists and supervisors

finished their 18 months of training in December 2024. The second cohort of 9 therapists and supervisors (4 therapists dropped out during the quarter) completed their second 2-day in-person learning session in the first week of December 2024. The Cradle 2 Crayons (C2C) Clinical Director and the CPP trainer have set dates for the third cohort scheduled to begin in February 2025. The Clinical Director is actively conducting outreach with community partners and behavioral health agencies to finalize the list for that third cohort.

- The C2C Clinical Director continues to host a virtual CPP reflective group twice per month to support the learning and implementation of CPP for any therapists who have already completed their training. The CPP trainer also offers a quarterly reflective group for supervisors.
- C2C Clinical Director and Circle of Security (COS) training department registered 21 attendees from community agencies and Department of Child Safety (DCS) units in a virtual COS training scheduled for January 2025.
- Implementation of the C2C Court Program in Maricopa county began in the first quarter of SFY25. Families are assigned to Judges and Attorneys to participate in Family Team Meetings. This implementation began with 3 families and additional cases will be identified starting in January 2025 in order to fill each of the Judges calendars with 10 cases each. Foster/Kinship placements are also agreeing to be a part of the team to support the goal of reunification and in many cases are transporting the children to the court for engagement with their parents during the meetings.
- C2C Clinical Director continues to provide the following trainings to systems partners to increase awareness, knowledge and understanding across the system of the needs of young children and their families: Effects of Abuse and Neglect on Child Development and Trauma Responsiveness to 23 DCS specialists, case aides and supervisors and Understanding the Dynamic of Domestic Violence in Child Welfare training to Judges and Attorneys who work with dependency cases in the Juvenile Court.
- Professional Turnover in all areas of the systems in child welfare have created barriers to enrollment in trainings for the first two quarters of SFY25.
- C2C Clinical Director and other Maricopa Court Team (MCCT) staff continue to foster a collaborative learning environment with community systems partners. Work continues on an interdisciplinary approach to identify and address systems gaps, reduce disparities, and create improvement in new policies through the use of evidenced-based practices. A problem

statement: “Parents involved in dependency proceedings are excluded from the services their children are provided” is the focus of the work of the MCCT. Subcommittees continue to work on system mapping/identification, policy review and information sharing. These subcommittees meet monthly and are creating an updated service letter that outlines services that the parent receives that contains comprehensive information about items such as the case plan, services their children are receiving and court information. An infographic of the system mapping services/resources available for families is also being created. All designed to ensure that families are informed and guided through the process with the goal of reunification.

Current SFY25 Budget Allocation:	Regions Funding:	
Total Funding Amount: \$100,000	Phoenix North	Phoenix South
Regional Allocation: \$16,666.67	Northwest Maricopa	Southwest Maricopa
Anticipated SFY26 Funding Changes: NO	East Maricopa	Southeast Maricopa
Staff Recommendations:		
<p>All six regional councils have approved the SFY26 funding plans to continue to invest in the Partnering with Child Welfare Systems Change Strategy for SFY26. A total of \$100,000 (\$16,666 per Council) will be allocated to support the professional development of child welfare professionals within the Maricopa Court Team Community.</p>		

Early Childhood Nutrition Team

FTF Strategic Plan Desired Outcome:

High-Quality Preventive and Continuous Health Care

Priority Strategy Area:

Children's Health Systems Change

Project Purpose and Goals:

The purpose of the Early Childhood Nutrition Team is to implement a multifaceted systemic change that builds organizational capacity, reduces duplication of efforts, aligns messaging and results in increased coordination of early childhood nutrition and family support services. The vision for the ECNT is to coordinate efforts so that families with young children prenatal to 5 in Maricopa County will be supported in providing nutritious food and establishing healthy eating habits while creating a community-based system of support for children's health.

The Early Childhood Nutrition Team is guided by the following values:

- **Equity** - Equity is achieved when everyone can attain their full potential. By focusing on policy, systems and environmental change, we are addressing the root causes of inequities in our local early childhood development and food systems.
- **Collaboration** - Effective collaboration happens when communities and decision makers come together. Our teams create spaces at local, regional and state levels to learn and act together.
- **Inclusion** - Families with young children, prenatal to five, are the center of this work. We engage families in the development, implementation and evaluation of solutions.
- **Prevention** - Change takes time. We commit to long-term action to support positive health outcomes for Arizona's young children.

Progress to Date:

In SFY25:

- Successful Statewide Cross-Team Meeting:**
 ECN hosted its first in-person cross-team meeting since 2019, with all regions and directors present. Partners reported high satisfaction, appreciated hearing from other teams, and expressed a desire for more regular cross-region collaboration.
- Policy Team Milestone:**
 The Policy Team finalized and created an original Safe Feeding Infographic after resolving licensing issues, and partners have secured support for wide distribution using grant and in-kind resources.
- Parent/Caregiver Resource Launch:**
 The Healthy Meals on a Budget Resource Guide was finalized and received positive pilot feedback. It will be posted on major early childhood platforms to increase family access to nutrition support.
- Regional Teams – Focus on Partnership Expansion and Innovation:**
 Across regions, teams focused on strengthening partnerships (e.g., Advance Community collaborations), piloting new family workshops, addressing rural service gaps, and planning sustainable projects despite staffing and resource barriers

Current SFY25 Budget Allocation:	Regions Funding:	
Total Funding Amount: \$200,000	Phoenix North	Phoenix South
Regional Allocation: \$33,333	Northwest Maricopa	Southwest Maricopa
Anticipated SFY26 Funding Changes: NO	East Maricopa	Southeast Maricopa
Staff Recommendations:		
All six regional councils have approved the SFY26 funding plans to continue to invest in the Children’s Health Systems Change Strategy for SFY26 . A total of		

\$200,000 (\$33,333 per regional council) will be allocated to support the Early Childhood Nutrition Teams at the regional and policy levels.

Family Resource Center Network

FTF Strategic Plan Desired Outcome:

Navigating and Connecting Families to Resources

Priority Strategy Area:

Family Support and Literacy Systems Change

Project Purpose and Goals:

The primary goals of the Family Resource Center Network are to promote community collaboration and coordination through:

- Developing a network where Family Resource Center (FRC) staff are able to maximize resources and reduce duplicate efforts.
- Improving service delivery in a standardized way to address the needs of families through Standards of Quality training.
- Building capacity of FRC staff through professional development to deliver highly quality family resource center services.
- Sharing expertise, training resources and fostering a learning community across the various community organizations.
- Co-leading the FTF Communities of Practice for FRCs to ensure partners are learning from each other towards collective impact and continuous quality improvement of the FRC program.
- Supporting the statewide Family Resource Center Project along with the core planning team (First Things First, Department of Child Safety, National Family Support Network, Prevent Child Abuse Arizona and Department of Economic Security).
- Consultant will work with Arizona Family Resource Network and FTF staff to establish a comprehensive and realistic two-year strategic plan.

Progress to Date:

The work of the Arizona Family Resource Center Network (AZFRN) is being led by Prevent Child Abuse Arizona (PCAAZ). PCAAZ has completed the following:

AZFRN & FRAC Facilitation

Three monthly FRAC (Family Resource Advisory Council) meetings have taken place since the December Progress Report, with a fourth meeting set for April 16. The January FRAC meeting took the form of an in-person leadership retreat where they focused on:

- exploring FRAC's strengths via the Gallup Strengths Finder Assessment with the guidance of a certified facilitator.
- crafting compelling stories in a session led by an FTF engagement coordinator, generating talking points for a shared messaging document designed to be used by anyone in the network seeking to communicate effectively about the work.

Additionally, FRAC approved funds for the creation of a new website with increased functionality and searchability, as well as Zumbini training and year-long subscriptions for interested network members.

Community of Practice

Since the December progress report, two Quality Standards Community of Practice sessions have taken place. The February session focused on the Community Strengthening Standards and had 9 attendees. There were 4 evaluation surveys submitted. All survey respondents indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with the session.

The April session focused on the Evaluation Standards and had 7 attendees. There were 3 evaluation surveys submitted. All respondents indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with the session.

FRC Connections met in February to discuss the challenges facing their undocumented families in light of the immigration policies enacted by the current administration. Attendees heard from Melissa Boyle of Phoenix Families First FRCs, who shared helpful resources families can use to better understand their rights and craft a plan in the case of deportation. There were 37 participants engaged in the discussion, which proved to be highly productive and collaborative. Participants shared resources and received a follow up email with the contributions of the entire group. The next FRC Connections meeting is set for May 14.

The fourth Coffee with FTF session took place on February 28. FTF staff shared reminders about Listen for Good surveys, Protective Factors surveys, and FRC Outcomes documentation.

They also shared updates related to the FRC Leads Meeting in January, and facilitated breakout discussions on retention, resources, and referrals. The next Coffee with FTF session is scheduled for May 13.

Professional Development

In-Person Trainings:

On March 3-4, Alison Steier of Southwest Human Development facilitated a 2-day, in-person training on the Facilitating Attuned Interactions (FAN) model. There were 36 participants who all received their FAN Practitioner Certification signifying they are able to use the FAN model as a tool to guide their interactions with families so that they are as in sync or “attuned” as possible and able to create opportunities for people to think new thoughts and try new ways of behaving.

On April 11, there was a virtual Zumbini training. There were 17 participants in that live training, as well as 7 additional participants who will engage with a pre-recorded training. All 24 participants will receive their Zumbini certification and a yearlong subscription so that they can offer classes to their families.

On May 2, there will be a 1-day training on Reflective Supervision led by Rose Phillips. There are 28 registrants.

The FRC Summit will take place the week of August 18. The FRC Summit Planning Committee has made significant progress - the theme, keynote topic, and workshop selections are set. The detailed logistics related to facilitating a FRC Activity Fair are set to be determined at the April committee meeting.

Virtual Trainings:

Following the February network meeting, they offered a 2-hour virtual workshop on ACEs and Trauma, facilitated by Sandi Cimino of the ACEs Consortium. There were 24 survey respondents who collectively rated the training as a 4.7 on a scale of 5. All respondents indicated the training was very relevant to their work.

Following the April network meeting, they offered a 2-hour virtual training on the Ages and Stages Questionnaire, facilitated by Patty Merk. There were 14 survey respondents who collectively rated the training as a 4.2 on a scale of 5. Ten respondents indicated the training was very relevant to their work, while four indicated it was somewhat relevant or not at all relevant.

Quality Standards Trainings

There have been two Standards of Quality virtual certification trainings since the prior progress report. Following the February 4-5 training, 21 participants received certification. Following the March 26-27 training, 19 participants received certification. The next training, set for April 29-30, has 18 registrants as of April 14. This is the final training of the fiscal year.

Sustainability

- \$12k in sponsorships have been raised to support the 2025 FRC Summit
- PCAAZ co-leads the FRC Pathways Team, a statewide collaborative driving the vision of a sustainable, comprehensive system of Family Resource Centers (FRCs) accessible to all families with children ages 0-17.
 - The team's six-point strategy includes identifying current resources

and needs, raising awareness, securing funding, expanding AZFRN, and aligning with broader initiatives.

- Current efforts include surveying FRCs on the resources needed to serve families with children of all ages, expanding FRCs in rural counties, and launching a statewide website to locate FRCs (funded by DCS).
- Engagement activities include a statewide convening of 56 FRCs and 6 partners, and a planned “VIP session” at the July 2025 Child Abuse Prevention Conference to engage business leaders in FRC support.

Current SFY25 Budget Allocation:	Regions Funding:	
Total Funding Amount: \$180,000	Phoenix North	Phoenix South
Regional Allocation: \$29,167	Northwest Maricopa	Southwest Maricopa
Anticipated SFY26 Funding Changes: NO	East Maricopa	Southeast Maricopa

Staff Recommendations:

All six regional councils have approved the SFY26 funding plans to continue to invest in the **Family Support & Literacy Systems Change** Strategy for **SFY26**. A total of **\$180,000 (\$29,166.67 per Council)** will be allocated to support the Family Resource Center Network.

Home Visitation Coordinated Referral System

FTF Strategic Plan Desired Outcome:

Navigating and Connecting Families to Resources

Priority Strategy Area:

Home Visitation Coordinated Referral System

Project Purpose and Goals:

Project Purpose: Oversee a single entry point with multiple avenues for referrals to connect families to an appropriate home visitation program.

Primary Goals:

- Identify and communicate with home visitation programs to increase coordination across providers, understand eligibility for the specific programs and regularly check to monitor vacancies to successfully refer families
- Follow up on referrals to determine if families were successfully enrolled (e.g., received their first home visit)
- Outreach and education to support community providers serving the target population in using the coordinated referral system and identifying families who are eligible and interested in home visitation

Progress to Date:

The grant partner implements the Parent Partners Plus (PPP) program and continues to streamline connecting families with the most appropriate home visitation program. PPP also manages the waitlist of families seeking home visitation services and refers them to appropriate community resources. Waitlisted families are regularly engaged to receive information about other community resources. Since its inception, PPP has served over 25,000 caregivers. PPP convenes home visitation grant partners to work more intentionally and collaboratively in the community. Currently, 10 FTF-funded and 19 non-FTF-funded home visiting programs in Maricopa County participate in the Home Visitation Coordinated Referral (HVCR) Alliance. Additionally, PPP continues to coordinate opportunities among home visitation providers with branding, marketing, outreach and recruitment with consistent messaging.

In December 2024, PPP hosted a strategic planning session for their advisory group to gain their perspective on strategic priorities for the upcoming year. Alliance members participated in a Weaver Network activity to find challenges and set priorities for 2025.

Strategic Priority 1: Engagement and Collaboration

Goal – By December 2026, PPP has a connected partner based representative of different leadership levels and home visiting programs in Maricopa County.

Strategic Priority 2: Integrated Outreach

Goal – By December 2026, PPP is integrated across all Alliance partner efforts.

Other goals:

By June 2025, explore whether an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion statement should be developed for the Alliance, including its purpose and how it will be used.

By September 2025, recruit 1-2 Advisory group members from new organizational Alliance members.

PPP hosted a strategic planning session for the PPP Advisory Group members in December 2023 to gain their perspective on strategic priorities for the upcoming year. In advance of this meeting, alliance members completed the Wilder Collaboration Factors survey to identify areas for improvement in the collaboration. The survey showed strengths, including members seeing the collaboration as being in their self-interest, mutual respect and trust, flexibility and open and frequent communication. Areas for improvement included having multiple layers of participation and an appropriate cross-section of members. The PPP Advisory Group adjusted the alliance meetings to allow more staff participation at all levels of alliance member programs. PPP implemented these changes through June 2024. In July 2024, PPP hosted an alliance meeting and invited program staff/home visitors in addition to the manager, who usually attends, to allow for more staff participation at different levels. The focus of the meeting was self-care for home visitors and included time for networking with staff from other programs.

Current SFY25 Budget Allocation:	Regions Funding:	
Total Funding Amount: \$380,000	Phoenix North	Phoenix South
Regional Allocation: \$63,000	Northwest Maricopa	Southwest Maricopa
Anticipated SFY26 Funding Changes: NO	East Maricopa	Southeast Maricopa
Staff Recommendations:		
<p>All six regional councils have approved the SFY26 funding plans to continue to invest in the Home Visitation Coordinated Referral strategy for SFY26. A total of \$380,000 (\$63,000 per Council) will be allocated to support this strategy.</p>		

Oral Health Systems Change

FTF Strategic Plan Desired Outcome:

High-Quality Preventive and Continuous Health Care

Priority Strategy Area:

Children's Health Systems Change

Project Purpose and Goals:

Project Purpose: To promote awareness and implementation of oral health screening and prevention among families with young children and community health providers (pediatric medical and dental).

Primary Goals:

1. Promote education and awareness through a targeted oral health media campaign.
2. Promote medical-dental integration (MDI) by implementing a pilot MDI project at a community health center located in Maricopa County.
3. Convene a medical-dental integration (MDI) committee consisting of government, nonprofit and private community and health organizations.

Progress to Date:

Goal 1: Promote education and awareness through a targeted oral health media campaign.

First Things First's Communications staff partnered with an external marketing agency to create a website landing page and digital content promoting the importance of taking care of baby teeth and seeing a dental provider. The content drives users to the Baby Teeth Matter website where parents and caregivers can learn more about pediatric oral health and connect them to resources.

SFY25 Update:

- The [website](#) was updated to include direct links to the FTF Healthy Teeth resource page and a pediatric dentist locator.
- The SFY25 campaign containing videos and social media ads was launched in January 2025 and will run through June 2025.

The MDI project is facilitated by lead consultant Sandi Perez of SandRose, LLC and Kimberly Freeman, RDH. SandRose is contracted with Neighborhood Outreach Access to Health (NOAH) to implement the MDI pilot project at their Palomino Health Center located in Phoenix. The clinic utilizes an integrated dental hygienist who performs oral health screenings and fluoride varnishes to children receiving their well-child exams with medical providers.

Goal 2: Promote medical-dental integration (MDI) by implementing a pilot MDI project at a community health center located in Maricopa County.

SFY25 Update:

- Medical providers and assistants have been trained in *Smiles For Life* which instructs how to conduct oral health screenings during well-child visits.
- Through monthly coaching sessions, NOAH has created clinical workflows that incorporate oral health screenings, fluoride varnishes and dental referrals into well-child visits.
- The integrated dental hygienist continues seeing a high volume of patients on a regular basis and the clinic is now working to increase more oral health production from the medical providers.
- To celebrate National Children’s Dental Health Month in February, electric toothbrushes were purchased to be distributed to all patients who received a screening and scheduled a same-day dental appointment.

April 2024 - January 2025 Data:

Program Totals – Cumulative

	Integrated Hygienist	Medical Provider	Totals
Patients ages 6-18	1,287	6	1,293
Patients ages 0-5	932	5	937
Total Patients	2,219	11	2,230
Varnish ages 6-18	549	0	549
Varnish ages 0-5	371	0	371
Total Varnish	920	0	920

Goal 3: Convene a medical-dental integration (MDI) committee consisting of government, nonprofit and private community and health organizations.

The MDI committee convened in January and received updates on the oral health campaign, MDI project and next steps for systems change work around oral health. They will meet again in the summer/fall 2025 for program updates.

Current SFY25 Budget Allocation:	Regions Funding:	
Total Funding Amount: \$386,000	Phoenix North	Phoenix South
Regional Allocation: \$64,333	Northwest Maricopa	Southwest Maricopa
Anticipated SFY26 Funding Changes: NO	East Maricopa	Southeast Maricopa
Staff Recommendations:		
<p>All six regional councils have approved the SFY26 funding plans to continue to invest in the Oral Health Systems Change Strategy for SFY26. A total of \$386,000 (\$64,333 per council) will be allocated to support the Medical-Dental Integration work and oral health media campaign. The budget will be utilized as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$100,000 - oral health media campaign • \$222,000 - MDI pilot project with NOAH • \$60,000 - Consultation and facilitation of MDI committee • \$4,000 - Administrative fees with state contracts (Knowledge Services) 		

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Phoenix South SWOT Analysis



Strengths



- Structure brings people together with focus; regional council and State Board
- Unified vision of what we want for the community



- Passionate, diverse, involved, deep roots in community



- Quality First centers rising in star system; focus and target where needed



Strengths



- First priority is most vulnerable; everyone rises when all have opportunity



- Diversified funding
- History will help us move forward
- We use voices well; trendsetters; don't take no for an answer



- Deep thinkers and advocates
- Amount of scholarships and partnerships



Weaknesses



- Need more Latino representation; membership reflective of service population



- Reaching "boots on ground"; organizations with funding



- FTF turnover
- Large geographic region which means higher % of need



Weaknesses



- RNA is not helpful, need more useful model
 - Data doesn't diversify by ethnicity groups
 - Don't know if help is going where needed
 - Helpful if structure by school districts
 - Need more anecdotal data
 - Need more measurable outcome data
- Difficult to partner with FTF



Opportunities



- Work with Head Starts for data
- Partnering with organizations in Phoenix South that have long-term relationships with families and drawing them into community
- Invite executive leadership and State Board to be partners
- Nationwide interest in child care as good business practice and educate people on impact of policy





Opportunities



- Workforce development efforts
- Building on relationships and embeddedness in the faith community as messengers and connectors



- More awareness to families; Hispanic/Spanish-speaking media



- Star rating as standard for centers outside of Quality First
- Birth to 20 organizations



Threats



- Election
- Federal policies
- Current political climate



- Funding



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Next Steps