Partnering With Parents in their role as their child's first teacher
Recently, children across the State of Arizona experienced an unplanned pause in their education as Teachers walked out of classrooms for higher wages and secure, sustainable, education funding.

As Arizona’s Parent Training and Information Center, Raising Special Kids is often asked to comment publicly on events that may impact students with disabilities and special health care needs and their families. In response to this we landed on a few key points:

- Our experience is that parents and families raising a child or children with disabilities are resilient in the face of challenges, whatever form those challenges take.
- Parents of children with disabilities often struggle with appropriate child care under normal circumstances.
- A walkout is a change in the educational routine for students that may have the similar result we would see over a holiday break. Skills that students are developing in school may be lost, or may take time to relearn, after coming back from a planned, or unplanned, break from school.
- Special Education services not delivered to a child, through no fault of their own, need to be made up, and public schools will need to work with parents and IEP Teams to ensure the child receives the services and supports entitled to them under the IDEA.

All of that being said, and whichever side of the debate we find ourselves, I would like to thank the broader Arizona community for their service during this time. A mentor of mine once said, “I’m less concerned with assigning fault as I am finding a solution.” Churches, City Parks and Recreation Departments, Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCas, Community Centers, Day Care facilities, Friends, Neighbors, and all that opened their doors and rallied volunteers for the hundreds of thousands of Arizona families whose children were out of school, we say, “Thank You for helping families find a solution.”

Christopher Tiffany, MEd
Being the parent of an infant or young child is an important job, but it isn’t an easy one. First Things First knows that today’s parents are looking for easily accessible, high-quality parenting information. That’s why FTF partners with families to provide resources and tools to help them support the growth and development of infants, toddlers and preschoolers in Arizona.

**DIGITAL PARENT KIT**

For example, the FTF digital Parent Kit is designed to support parents from the day they bring baby home, to the ages and stages of a young child to caring for your family’s physical and emotional well-being.

The kit covers a wide-range of topics from pregnancy, child development, safety, physical and emotional health, to finding quality child care. The information is presented through useful tips and dependable online information and resources to help parents do their best in supporting the healthy development of their baby, toddler or preschooler.

**QUICK ANSWERS: BIRTH TO 5 HELPLINE**

Another resource is the FTF-funded Birth to 5 Helpline, (1-877-705-KIDS). This program is free and open to all Arizona families with young children birth to age 5, who want the latest child development information from experts in the field. Have a question about your baby’s sleep schedule? Give them a call. The experts field questions on everything from health and nutrition, safety to potty training and more.

**PARENTING CLASSES**

FTF funds family resource centers throughout Maricopa County. At these comprehensive centers for families of kids birth to age 5, the focus is on strengthening families, providing positive parenting tools and nurturing early childhood development. Families and caregivers can attend parenting classes on topics such as early literacy, the importance of play to children’s learning and how to deal with challenging behaviors. To find one near you, visit: [http://www.familyresourceaz.org/](http://www.familyresourceaz.org/).

**IDENTIFYING QUALITY CHILD CARE**

FTF is also there to help families identify what quality looks like in child care and preschool settings. Knowing that a child’s early childhood experiences are achieved through a variety of methods, FTF helps parents understand what a quality early learning environment looks like. Whether it is through at-home care by a trusted adult or in a child center, check out FTF’s signature program, Quality First. The website, [qualityfirstaz.com](http://qualityfirstaz.com) gives tips on what quality looks like and types of questions to ask when choosing a caregiver.

**THE GIFT OF YOU**

Remember, one of the best ways to be a child’s first and best teacher is to give your son or daughter your time. Everything they see and experience, especially positive interactions with the adults in their lives, shapes them.

---

We Hear It All the Time!

Almost every day at Raising Special Kids, parents share with us that they have received this advice from other parents or professionals:

“More than anything, your child is a child first. As much as possible, treat them as you would any other child in your family. Their diagnosis or disability should not define them.”

Our friends at First Things First know a thing or two about parenting and have shared with us some great advice and information. Whether or not a child has a diagnosis or a disability, the resources in the adjacent article will be useful for new parents.

If you are ever concerned about how your child is developing, it is always best to ask your pediatrician. They can provide you with additional resources or, if necessary, refer you to specialists for further evaluation.

If you are looking for information specific to children with disabilities, reach out to us at Raising Special Kids and one of our family support specialists will provide you with resources and support specific to your needs. Call 602-242-4366 or 800-237-3007 or email info@raisingspecialkids.org.
Look for opportunities every day to read, talk, sing and play together. These experiences will mean the most to a young child’s learning and build memories that last a lifetime. And best of all, time doesn’t cost a dime. These types of quality interactions between adults and a young child are what will help them make sense of the world. You can get other parenting tips by signing up for the FTF First Things newsletter at FirstThingsFirst.org.

First Things First (FTF) is a voter-created, statewide organization that funds early education and health programs to help kids be ready to succeed when they enter kindergarten. Decisions about how those funds are spent are made by local councils staffed by community volunteers. To learn more, visit FirstThingsFirst.org.

More than 2,800 parents and children had fun at Special Day for Special Kids! February 24, 2018
Parents and professionals alike raved about the sold-out Raising Special Kids Symposium on Children With Special Health Care Needs which was made possible by our generous sponsors including United HealthCare, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona, First Things First, Mercy Care Plan and Mercy Maricopa Integrated Care.

Presenters and sponsors gathered the evening prior to the event at Seasons 52 in Phoenix to meet and discuss their mutual interests and diverse methods of supporting families of children with disabilities.

Members of the Julia Leadership Circle including the group's namesake, Julia Banahan and her parents Jim and Paula, were also in attendance. Organizations and individuals become members of the JLC once their annual donations to Raising Special Kids reach $1,000.

The Symposium began with an inspirational keynote by Julianne Beckett who shared the story of how she and her daughter Katie paved the way for millions of children with disabilities to receive home- and community-based services. At the conclusion of her presentation, Ms. Beckett challenged the crowd to "Get out there and lead!" Adding, "Your kids can be powerful!"

One parent shared, "When we left we sat in the car and just cried! The knowledge we gained, and the feeling we are not alone, was overwhelming!"

While one professional shared, "This is one of the most valuable and well-run events I have been to. The speakers were excellent."

Learn more about the speakers and topics at raisingspecialkids.org.

Follow us on Facebook to keep up to date with information on the next Symposium scheduled for October 2019. The focus for 2019? Behavior and behavioral health.

Julie Beckett sharing the inspiring story of her daughter Katie, the first recipient of the Medicaid Waiver which allowed her to receive services in her home rather than in an institutional setting.
Jennifer Delgado is a full-time certified pharmacy technician and a single mom of three beautiful kids. She loves to read and work out. Although 5-10K obstacle courses are her favorite activities, she recently completed her second half-marathon.

Jennifer’s youngest child, Gabriel, is a happy, smiling 10-year-old boy who loves to give hugs. When he was 5 years old, he was diagnosed with autism. Jennifer recalled, “Even before his diagnosis, I knew something was going on with him. Little did I know, our lives were going to change forever.”

Once Gabe had a diagnosis, Jennifer began identifying what next steps she needed to take. She worked to separate areas that were simply part of his unique personality from areas where Gabe really needed help to develop his skills. She remembered, “If it hadn’t been for tenacity, a deep fighting strength that came from the support and love of friends and family, I don’t know where I’d be today.”

At one point, someone in her circle of support recommended she call Raising Special Kids. Jennifer shared, “When I called, they listened, guided me through the IEP process, helped me understand how to deal with challenging situations at school, gave me resources to seek help for my son, and encouraged me; they taught me to advocate for my son.”

Having a student with autism has been a learning experience for Gabe’s school as well. Cooperating with his IEP team has become easier for Jennifer. She is happy the school’s increased awareness will help them more easily accept future students with autism, effectively address their behaviors, and provide them with appropriate academic challenges. Increased school support and private tutoring have helped Gabe’s academics soar to new heights, giving Jennifer a sense that the future will be OK for him.

Jennifer is now a volunteer parent leader with Raising Special Kids. Sharing her thoughts on why she wanted to become a parent leader, she said, “You can’t put a price tag on kindness, compassion and peace of mind. Every parent struggles with making the right decision for his or her child and they all need encouragement, hope and acknowledgment for doing the best he or she can with the resources they have.” She added, “If I can help just one person and make a difference in their life, it’s all worth it. When I hear back from a parent with good news, I am so thankful this process has come full circle. What was once a difficult time in my life helped me grow into a better mother and person. I’m grateful for this special life.”
Early Childhood Education
(Birth - Kindergarten)
Learn the basics of the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and how to make a smooth transition from early intervention services to preschool at age 3. Participants will learn about the process of evaluation, eligibility and of services provided through an Individualized Education Program (IEP) by your local public school district. The discussion will include the transition process from preschool to Kindergarten and skills parents can help with at home.

Positive Behavior Support
Learn how to reduce unwanted behavior and increase good behavior by using Positive Behavior Supports in your home and in the community. Understand the role you play in your child’s behavior, and how to work with the school when behaviors get in the way of learning.

IEP Training
Have a better understanding of Special Education and the Individualized Education Program (IEP). The following topics will be discussed: the IEP document, the parent’s role in the special education process, and how to prepare for, and be an effective participant at the meeting. You will learn who is a member of your child’s IEP team, how to track your child’s progress, and what to do if the team does not agree.

High School Transition
This workshop explains the IEP transition planning process which should begin for students no later than 16 years of age. Discover how to identify classes, activities and services that help prepare students with disabilities for higher education, vocational training, employment, and additional resources that help with planning for adult life.

Turning 18 - Legal Options
Learn about the different legal options families should consider when their child becomes an adult at the age of 18. Become familiar with the steps of the guardianship process. Participants will learn how they can stay involved in decision-making with schools, doctors and other professionals.

These trainings and more are available statewide and at no cost for families.

Please visit our website at www.raisingspecialkids.org for the most current schedule and locations or call 602-242-4366 or 800-237-3007.

To request a Raising Special Kids presentation for your school or organization, see http://raisingspecialkids.org/trainingworkshop-request/ or call our office at 602-242-4366 or 800-237-3007 for more information.
Ser padre de un lactante o niño pequeño es un trabajo importante, pero no es fácil.

First Things First sabe que los padres de hoy buscan información sobre la crianza que facilite el acceso fácil y de alta calidad, por lo que FTF se alía con las familias para proporcionar recursos y herramientas para ayudarles a apoyar el crecimiento y desarrollo de lactantes, niños pequeños y niños en edad preescolar en Arizona.

**KIT DIGITAL PARA PADRES**

Por ejemplo, el Kit digital para padres de FTF está diseñado para apoyar a los padres desde el día en que lleven al bebé a casa hasta las edades y etapas de un niño pequeño y hasta cuidar el bienestar físico y emocional de su familia. El kit cubre una amplia gama de temas, desde embarazo, desarrollo infantil, seguridad, salud física y emocional hasta que pueda encontrar cuidado infantil de calidad. La información se presenta mediante tips útiles e información y recursos confiables en línea para ayudar a los padres a hacer su mejor esfuerzo por apoyar el desarrollo saludable de su bebé, niño pequeño o en edad preescolar.

**RESPUESTAS RÁPIDAS: LÍNEA DE AYUDA DEL NACIMIENTO HASTA LOS 5**

Otro recurso es la línea de ayuda del nacimiento hasta los 5 financiada por FTF (1-877-705-KIDS). Este programa es gratis y está abierto a todas las familias de Arizona con niños pequeños, desde el nacimiento hasta la edad de 5 años, que quieran la información más reciente sobre desarrollo infantil de parte de expertos en esta área. ¿Tiene preguntas sobre el horario de sueño de su bebé? Llámelos. Los expertos responden...
preguntas sobre cualquier tema, desde salud y nutrición hasta seguridad y entrenamiento para ir al baño y más.

**CLASES DE CRIANZA**

FTF financia cuenta con centros de recursos familiares por todo el condado de Maricopa. En Estos centros integrales son para familias que tengan niños de recién nacidos hasta la los 5 años de edad, el enfoque es para fortalecer a las familias, brindándoles herramientas de crianza positivas y fomentando el desarrollo de la infancia. Las familias y los cuidadores pueden asistir a clases de crianza sobre temas como la alfabetización temprana, la importancia de los juegos para el aprendizaje infantil y cómo lidiar con comportamientos desafiantes. Para localizar uno un centro cerca de usted, visite [http://www.familyresourceaz.org/](http://www.familyresourceaz.org/).

**IDENTIFICAR CUIDADO INFANTIL DE CALIDAD**

FTF también está ahí para ayudar a las familias a identificar si hay calidad en el cuidado infantil y los entornos preescolares. Sabiendo que las experiencias de la infancia temprana se alcanzan por medio de varios métodos, FTF ayuda a los padres a entender cómo se ve un entorno de aprendizaje temprano de calidad. Ya sea mediante cuidado en casa por parte de un adulto de confianza o en un centro infantil, eche un vistazo al famoso programa de FTF, Quality First (la calidad es primero). El sitio web, [qualityfirstaz.com](http://qualityfirstaz.com) da sugerencias sobre cómo debe ser la calidad y sobre los tipos de preguntas que hay que hacer al escoger a un cuidador.

**EL REGALO PARA USTED**

Recuerde, una de las mejores maneras de ser el primero y mejor maestro de un niño es darle a su hijo o hija su tiempo. Todo lo que ven y experimentan, en especial las interacciones positivas con los adultos en sus vidas, los forma. Todos los días busque oportunidades de leer, hablar, cantar y jugar juntos. Estas experiencias significarán mucho para el aprendizaje de un niño pequeño y crearán recuerdos que durarán toda la vida. Además, lo mejor de todo es que el tiempo no cuesta un centavo. Este tipo de interacciones de calidad entre adultos y un niño pequeño es lo que le ayudará a entender el mundo. Puede obtener otros tips de crianza si se inscribe al boletín de FTF First Things en [FirstThingsFirst.org](http://FirstThingsFirst.org).

First Things First (FTF) es una organización creada por electores a nivel estatal que dan la financiación para programas de educación de la temprana edad y salud para ayudar a los niños a estar listos para tener éxito cuando entren al jardín de niños. La toma de decisiones sobre cómo se deben gastar estos fondos las hacen los consejos locales dotados con el personal voluntario y comunitario. Para más información, visite [FirstThingsFirst.org](http://FirstThingsFirst.org).

---

**Talleres y entrenamientos**

[www.raisingspecialkids.org](http://www.raisingspecialkids.org) o llame al 800-237-3007

---

**El Comportamiento Positivo**

Aprenda cómo reducir el comportamiento no deseado y aumentar el buen comportamiento mediante apoyos de comportamiento positivo en casa y en la comunidad.

**Entrenamiento del IEP**

Aprenda sobre la educación especial y el propósito del Programa Educativo Individualizado (IEP).

**Cumpliendo los 18 años - Opciones Legales**

Aprenda sobre las diferentes opciones legales que las familias deben considerar cuando sus hijos se convierten en adultos a la edad de 18 años.
Thank You for Referring Families

To refer a family, download our referral form from http://bit.ly/2nQszAI

July-December 2017

A New Leaf
A to Z Therapies
Ability360
Abrazo Community Health Network
American Leadership Academy Charter School
Applied Behavioral Interventions
Arizona Autism Coalition
Arizona Charter Academy
Arizona Cooperative Therapies
Arizona Department of Child Safety
Arizona Department of Education
Arizona Department of Education/ASPIRE
Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council
Arizona Pediatric Neurology & Neurogenetics Associates
Arizona Pediatric Pulmonary
Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind
Arizona Youth & Family Services
Arizona's Children Association
Assurance Health & Wellness Center
AZ Care Providers
AZA United
Banner Health
Benevilla
Booker T. Washington Child Development Center
Canyon Vista Medical Center
Cardon Children's Medical Center
Care1st Avondale Resource and Housing Center
Care1st Health Plan Arizona
Catalina Foothills Unified District
Chandler Regional Medical Center
Chicanos Por La Causa
Children's Rehabilitative Services
Children's Clinics-Tucson CRS
Christian Family Care
Community Health Center of Yavapai
Court Appointed Special Advocates
Davis-Monthan EFMP

Arizona Department of Economic Security

- Arizona Early Intervention Program
- Division of Aging and Adult Services

Division of Developmental Disabilities
Division of Employment and Rehabilitation Services/Rehabilitation Services Administration
Desert Senita Community Health Center
Desert Valley Pediatrics
Dignity Health Center for Transitional Care
DMG Children's Rehabilitation Services
Easterseals Blake Foundation
El Rio Community Health Center
Family Connection of South Carolina
Family Involvement Center
Flagstaff Medical Center
Flowing Wells Unified School District
Fort Huachuca EFMP
Foundation For Blind Children
Fun Van by First Things First
Gateway Pediatrics
Gila River Health Care
Happy Kids Pediatrics
Healing Hearts Pediatrics
Heritage Health Care Center
HRT
Institute for Human Development
Isaac Elementary School District
Jewish Family & Children’s Service
Joubert Syndrome & Related Disorders Foundation
Kidabilities Occupational Therapy
Laveen Elementary School District
Liberty Elementary School District
Litchfield Elementary School District
Maricopa Integrated Health System
Mariposa Community Health Center
Maya Charter High School
Mesa Public Schools
Mountain Park Health Center
Mountain View Pediatrics
New Life Center
NOAH — Neighborhood Outreach Access to Health
North Country HealthCare
Northern Arizona Healthcare
Northwest Clinic for Children
Open Hearts Family Wellness
Page Unified School District
Paradise Valley Unified School District
Parent Aid
Pendleton Pediatrics
Peoria Unified School District
Phoenix Children's Hospital
Phoenix Head Start Program
Phoenix Indian Medical Center
Phoenix Union High School District
Pilot Parents of Southern Arizona
Pinal Gila Community Child Services
RAK Magazine
RISE Services
Roosevelt Elementary School District
SAGE Counseling
Save the Family
Sharing Down Syndrome Arizona
Sierra Vista Unified School District
Southwest Autism Research & Resource Center (SARRC)
Southwest Behavioral & Health Services
Southwest Human Development
Southwest Key Programs
St. Joseph’s Hospital
Stride Psychological Services
Summit Regional Healthcare Medical Center
Sunshine Pediatrics
SySTEM Phoenix Charter School
Terros Health
The Clubhouse
TOPS
Touchstone Health Services
Tucson Unified School District
UMOM New Day Center
University Family Care
Valle Del Sol
WACOG Head Start
Yavapai County Community Health Services
Yavapai Pediatrics
Yuma High School District
LEARN HOW TO GET YOUR HEALTH RECORD

The Guide to Getting & Using Your Health Records is for patients, parents, and caregivers who want to get their health records. A health record (also known as a medical record) is a written account of a person’s health history, including appointment notes, prescriptions, treatments, tests, and vaccines. It’s also for people who need the record of someone they represent or care for, like a child, elderly parent, or an adult with a disability.

YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO YOUR HEALTH RECORD

According to federal law, you have a right to see and get a copy of your health record from most health insurance plans and health care providers, including clinics, hospitals, pharmacies, labs, and nursing homes. Yet it can be a real challenge to get your health record if you’ve been cared for by multiple doctors in multiple places. Each one may have a different process for asking for and getting your record.

HOW TO GET YOUR HEALTH RECORD — AND USE IT

The guide is to help you through the process of getting your health record. It will show you how to make sure your records are accurate and complete — and how to use them to get the most out of your health care.

You can access the guide at: https://www.healthit.gov/how-to-get-your-health-record/

Parent Leaders

Thank you! Parent Leaders are the heart of our mission.

Avondale
- Belinda Johnson
- Angie Jeffreys
- Jill Nico
- Cave Creek
- Sarina Siebenaler
- Belinda Johnson
- Buckeye
- Jill Nico
- Cave Creek
- Sarina Siebenaler
- Chandler
- Susan Alonzo
- Christy Holstad
- Aimee Johnson
- Lisa Myers
- Cara Swierz
- Chino Valley
- Jody Brigham
- Cindy May
- Claire Portillo
- Jean Richmond-Bowman
- May Sheppard-Ketchner
- Jennifer Turrell
- Gilbert
- Heather Prouty
- Tricia Zimmerman
- Becky Getz
- Tina Wildoner
- Goodyear
- Elisabeth Stuewe
- Laveen
- Bonnie Carroll
- Mesa
- Cynthia Elliott
- Rosalba Mendoza
- Alissa Taylor
- Phoenix
- Heidie Gentes
- Kim Humphrey
- Kris Ohannessian-Dean
- Niccole Swim
- Peoria
- Karla Bautista
- Rosa Chacon
- Susan Coates
- Lucia Cota
- Aimee Craumer
- Cecilia Hartke
- Marissa Huth
- Adriana Jimenez
- Gabriel Maytorena
- Anna Olea
- Stephanie Mickelsen
- Kimberly Poeling
- Sheri Scruggs
- Eadie Smith
- Carol Stanton
- Susie Turrey
- Queen Creek
- Kin Counts
- San Luis
- Melissa Velez
- Scottsdale
- Jill Castle
- Nicole Kauffman
- Maura Knoell
- Steve Lee
- Laura Michael
- Katie Petersen
- Heidi VanderMolen
- Sedona
- Julie Perreault
- Sun City
- Melissa McQueen
- Surprise
- Jessika Moreno
- Tempe
- Stephanie Bayliss
- Janet Romo
- Tolleson
- Briseida Ceron
- Tucson
- Courtney Deean
- Jaclyn Larson
- Kimberly Williams
- Yuma
- Jennifer Delgado

The Parent Leaders listed above participated in leadership activities from February through April 2018. We appreciate each of our 300 Parent Leaders, but we do not have room to list all of their names.
Raising Special Kids
5025 E Washington, Ste #204
Phoenix, AZ 85034

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

FOR PARENTS, YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS
(Youth & young adults aged 14-26 invited. If under 18, must be accompanied by a parent or guardian)
Whether you’re a parent, a teen, or a young adult, participating in this day-long interactive event will help you learn about yourself and develop ideas of what you can do NOW that will contribute to a successful transition.

SATURDAY, JULY 28, 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM
5025 E Washington St, Phoenix, AZ 85034
(fragrance-free building)
please register at https://bit.ly/2rHQFRg