

## A Message from the President

AHSA Members and Friends,

As Arizona Head Start ended the 2011-2015 grant period and began work on the goals for 2016-2021, AHSA's value and strength were never more apparent. Thanks to the foundation built by AHSA leaders and members, Arizona now serves as a national model for Head Start collaboration, coordination, and alignment with the statewide Early Childhood Education system. AHSA members and the entire Head Start community benefited from scores of forums, conferences, symposiums, committee-led initiatives, and leading-edge trainings. AHSA also finalized critical agreements and Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) that share vital information, expand access to Head Start/EHS services, and further professional development.

Along with significant achievements, this report offers a vision of the work ahead. AHSA is already driving Head Start participation in quality improvement and professional development initiatives like Teaching Strategies Gold®, the CLASS observation tool, Quality First, and the Early Childhood Workforce Registry. Promising new partnerships are ensuring access to Head Start services for vulnerable populations including the homeless and refugees. Relationships with statewide stakeholders and innovative Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships are expanding access to services and resources for low-income children and families. Powerful positive changes are catalyzing as partners share strengths and solutions.

From this vantage point of past achievement and future challenges, I want to recognize and thank every individual, member agency and organization that makes the "Head Start Advantage" a reality, from our passionate Head Start staff and dedicated parents to statewide partners. Working together, we can close the gaps and overcome the barriers to fulfilling the promise of Head Start: Giving every child, regardless of circumstances at birth, an opportunity to succeed in school and in life.

*Mindy Zapata*

Mindy Zapata, President  
Arizona Head Start Association

### AHSA Leadership

Director, Jonathon Gonzales

#### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Mindy Zapata, President;  
Alecia Jackson, Vice President;  
Natalie Alvarez, Treasurer;  
Sonya Montoya, Secretary

#### COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

**Parent, Family and  
Community Engagement**

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#### Disabilities & Mental Health

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Kimberly Tan, Chair  
Shandeen Gomez, Vice-Chair

#### Early Child Care Partnership Ad Hoc Committee

Evangelina Del Real, Chair

"Every dollar  
invested in quality  
early childhood  
education produces  
a 7-10% per annum  
return in better  
education, health,  
social, and  
economic  
outcomes."

— James Heckman,  
Nobel Laureate  
in Economics

## Arizona's Critical Needs and the Head Start Advantage

The statistics can seem overwhelming. More than 35 percent of Arizona's children from birth to age 5 are living in poverty. Of the 15 percent of Arizona households with limited or uncertain food availability, 6 percent are hungry. Families make up an astounding 37 percent of Maricopa County's homeless population. An increase in abuse and neglect reporting has more children living in foster care than at any time in the past 15 years. Multiple adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are significantly higher in Arizona than the national average—traumas that have far-reaching negative effect on learning, health and behavior.

In looking for solutions to such daunting challenges, no single initiative holds greater promise for breaking poverty and toxic cycles than expanding access to Head Start and Early Head Start programs. Research has proven that attempts to build new skills or change behaviors on a damaged foundation are far more difficult, expensive, and less effective. Early intervention for serious socioeconomic disadvantages is crucial. That's why stakeholders across Arizona are partnering with Head Start as the national model for enriched classroom experiences, positive interactions, nurturing relationships, health and family services, and parent engagement.

We present this annual report with great pride in the Head Start advantage and the accomplishments of our Executive Staff, Board of Directors, dynamic committees, and statewide partners. We are deeply grateful for the passionate work of our AHSA members and the unwavering dedication of our Head Start staff, volunteers, and parents. Working hand in hand, we can build upon our strengths and inspire new allies in providing life-changing programs and services to Arizona's most vulnerable children and their families.

*Jonathon Gonzales*

Jonathon Gonzales  
AHSA Director

## 2016 Positive Statewide Impact

- **Arizona Head Start programs served 22,440 children, 156 pregnant women and 20,848 families**
- **Federal Head Start grants brought more than \$124 million into Arizona's economy**
- **Arizona Head Start agencies generated more than \$35 million in local community in-kind contributions**
- **For each invested dollar, Head Start yields an annual investment return ranging from 7 to 9%**
- **Arizona Head Start programs employ more than 4,500 individuals**



### Arizona Head Start/EHS

- **22,596 Head Start/EHS total enrollment**
- **17,226 Head Start preschool children**
- **4,284 EHS children (birth to 3 years)**
- **156 EHS pregnant women**
- **17,702 children served by grantees**
- **930 served by Migrant/Seasonal Head Start**
- **3,808 served by Arizona Tribal Programs**
- **1,429 receive public assistance like TANF, SSI**
- **569 children in foster care**
- **1,002 homeless children**

## America's School Readiness Program

Together, the federal Head Start and Early Head Start (EHS) programs provide "whole child, whole family" education, health, nutrition, and supportive services to poverty-level children from birth to age five and pregnant women. Arizona's local grantees receive federal funding through the Office of Head Start, a division of the Administration for Children and Families within the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. Community-based organizations that administer these programs in Arizona include Tribal governments, local municipalities, non-profit agencies, and school districts.

Arizona Head Start Association (AHSA) serves, unifies and empowers the statewide coalition of organizations that provide Head Start

and EHS programs. Member agencies, partners, and the statewide early education community benefit from AHSA's strength in driving cooperative efficiencies. AHSA carries out its mission of advocacy, collaboration, and education through a Director, a volunteer Executive Committee and Board of Directors, and four standing committees. In addition to membership dues, funding for AHSA studies, projects and training is provided by the Arizona Head Start State Collaboration Office through a grant from the Administration for Children and Families under the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services.

## The Head Start Advantage for Kids

Head Start's "whole child" model reaches far beyond school readiness to meet an entire spectrum of health, nutrition, and nurturing needs that enable learning. Constant investment in research defines and reinvigorates best practices and deepens the understanding of healthy development. Early Head Start's focus on infants and toddlers along with prenatal care takes advantage of the early intervention window so crucial to remediating developmental delays and disabilities.

Head Start children make progress toward norms in language, literacy, and math with improved social-emotional, language, and cognitive development. They develop better social skills, impulse control, and approaches to learning with fewer behavioral issues than their at-risk peers. They are more likely to be immunized, receive dental and medical care, and have better eating habits. Recent long-term studies

indicate that Head Start/EHS programs improve educational outcomes and increase the probability that participants will graduate from high school and go on to earn a post-secondary degree, license or certification.

## The Head Start Advantage for Families

Head Start plays a transformative role across two generations with services and support for families struggling with poverty and adverse circumstances. Parents, caregivers, and pregnant women learn positive skills and receive guidance in building stable, healthy home environments. Families are connected to a full range of resources including assistance with job training or continuing education, counseling, and crisis intervention. Head Start families have access to community events, resources, and in-house trainings on vital topics from health and literacy to parenting and the importance of male role models.

Parent engagement is one of the most powerful pillars of Head Start, including opportunities to participate

in program-level decisions and sit on policy-making boards and committees. Of the 18,508 volunteers serving Arizona Head Start in 2016, 86 percent were current or former Head Start parents. The Head Start advantage touches every aspect of family life. Head Start parents are more likely to increase their educational levels during their children's early years than other at-risk parents. They invest more time in family learning activities, read more with their children, use less physical punishment, and have higher levels of self-sufficiency.



**A 2016 study by leading economists on the life-cycle benefits of an influential early childhood program cites an investment return as high as 13 percent when disadvantaged children receive high-quality early education such as Early Head Start plus Head Start.**

**Arizona Head Start's father engagement initiatives in 2016 resulted in 6,160 participants in family assessment, 4,649 in family goal planning, and 6,306 in Head Start child development experiences.**

## The Head Start Advantage for Communities

Head Start strengthens the very fabric of the communities it serves by linking vulnerable populations and at-risk children and families to a full range of life-changing services and resources. On a statewide level, AHSA plays a leading role in partnerships and agreements that coordinate and streamline vital services.

### Coordination, Collaboration, Innovation

Finalized in 2016, the WIC (Women, Infants and Children) MOU between AHSA and the Arizona Department of Health Services gives Head Start/EHS programs access to critical information for the children whose families receive WIC federal program benefits and attend WIC clinics. The MOU coordinates services, avoids duplications, protects confidentiality, and streamlines procedures for both programs. Benefits to Head Start now include an AHSA-supplied map of all WIC locations highlighting sites that offer dental screenings, fluoride varnishes, and oral health education.

AHSA continues to develop and support initiatives that ensure access to Head Start/EHS advantages for high-risk and special populations. Multi-year efforts of AHSA-driven negotiations and legal reviews culminated in a Foster Care MOU between the Arizona Department of Child Services (DCS) and the Head Start State Collaboration Office that cleared a path for the delivery of early care and

education services to foster children. In 2016, the Catholic Charities Refugee program added a VISTA volunteer to coordinate and strengthen refugee family enrollment in Head Start/EHS programs. The new pilot program also provides "Refugee 101" training for Head Start family case workers, teachers, and home-base educators for a deeper understanding of the challenges and traumas that refugees face.

AHSA also secured funding for and hosted a "train the trainer" event to increase health literacy among Head Start/EHS parents. Facilitated by a national presenter, the training brought together 17 staff participants including nutrition and health managers, family support staff, and home base visitors. The curriculum included a hand-out booklet for parents and prepared attendees to train other staff members and parent leaders to serve as teachers and guides for a statewide program impact. Helping Head Start/EHS parents make better medical decisions benefits the child, the family, and the global healthcare system.

### Formal Agreements and Community Engagement

- **58 formal agreements with Child Care Partners**
- **593 agreements with Local Education Agencies to coordinate disabilities/transition services**
- **118 collaboration/resource-sharing agreements with public preschool programs**
- **125 agreements with Part C agencies to coordinate services for children with disabilities**



### EARLY EDUCATION



**1,027**  
total classes  
operated

**5,288**  
center-based  
programs

**2,181**  
home-based/  
combination/family  
child care

**4,072**  
children  
transported  
via bus

### YEAR-END HEALTH PROFILE



**94%**  
children  
with health  
insurance

**91%**  
pregnant  
women  
with health  
insurance

**98%**  
children with  
continually  
accessible  
health care

**98%**  
children with  
all possible  
immunizations  
(or exempt)

**87%**  
children  
up-to date on  
preventative/  
primary  
healthcare

**91%**  
children with  
continually  
accessible  
dental care

**87%**  
preschool  
children needing  
dental treatment  
received it

### MENTAL HEALTH AND SPECIAL NEEDS



**97%**  
preschool  
children with  
IEP\* received  
special education/  
services

**99%**  
infants/toddlers  
with IFSP\*  
received early  
intervention  
services

**1,878**  
preschool  
children with  
IEP eligible for  
special education

**407**  
EHS children  
with IFSP\*  
eligible for early  
intervention services

**435**  
professional  
mental health  
referrals for  
children

Follow Us    

The Arizona Head Start Association has prepared this annual report. Development, production and distribution were supported in part by funds from the Arizona Head Start State Collaboration Office.

\*Individualized Education Program (IEP), Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)



ARIZONA HEAD START PROGRAMS

For programs in Apache, Coconino, Navajo, & Yavapai Counties contact:

**G** Northern Arizona Council of Governments (NACOG)  
121 E. Aspen • Flagstaff, AZ 86001  
(928) 774-9504 • nacog.org

For programs in Cochise, Graham, Greenlee, Pima, & Santa Cruz Counties contact:

**G** Child Parent Centers, Inc. (CPC)  
602 E. 22nd St. • Tucson, AZ 85713  
(520) 882-0100 • childparentcenters.org

For programs in Gila & Pinal Counties contact:

**G** Pinal Gila Community Child Services, Inc. (PGCCS)  
1750 S. Arizona Blvd. • Coolidge, AZ 85128  
(520) 723-5321 • pgccs.org

For programs in La Paz, Mohave, & Yuma Counties contact:

**G** Western Arizona Council of Governments (WACOG)  
224 S. 3rd Ave., Suite 206  
Yuma, AZ 85364 • (928) 782-1886  
wacog.com

For programs in Maricopa County contact:

**G** Catholic Charities Westside Head Start  
7400 W. Olive, Suite 10  
Peoria, AZ 85345 • (623) 486-9868  
CatholicCharitiesAZ.org

**G** Child Crisis Arizona  
402 N. 24th St. • Phoenix, AZ 85008  
(602) 889-6165 • crisisnurseryphx.org

**G** City of Phoenix Education Division  
200 W. Washington, 19th Floor  
Phoenix, AZ 85003 • (602) 262-4040  
phoenix.gov/humanresources/index.html

**G** Maricopa County Head Start Zero – Five Program  
234 N. Central Ave.  
Phoenix, AZ 85004  
(480) 464-9669  
http://myhisd.maricopa.gov/

**G** Southwest Human Development (SWHD) Head Start  
2850 N. 24th St. • Phoenix, AZ 85008  
(602) 266-5976 • swhd.org

**D** Alhambra School District Head Start  
4510 N. 37th Ave. • Phoenix, AZ 85019  
(602) 246-5155 • alhambraesd.org

**D** Booker T. Washington Child Development Center, Inc. (BTWC)  
1519 E. Adams • Phoenix, AZ 85034  
(602) 252-4743 • btwchild.org

**D** Deer Valley Head Start  
20402 North 15th Ave.  
Phoenix, AZ 85027  
(623) 445-4991 • dvrusd.org

**D** Fowler Head Start  
6250 W. Durango • Phoenix, AZ 85043  
(623) 474-7260 • fesd.org

**D** Greater Phoenix Urban League (GPU) Head Start  
1402 S. 7th Ave. • Phoenix, AZ 85007  
(602) 276-9305 • gphxul.org

**D** Murphy Head Start  
2615 W. Buckeye Rd. • Phoenix, AZ 85009  
(602) 353-5414, ext. 0156 • msdaz.org

**D** Roosevelt School District Head Start  
4615 South 22nd St. • Phoenix, AZ 85040  
(602) 252-4919 • rsd.k12.az.us

**D** Washington Elementary School District  
8430 N. 39th Ave. • Phoenix, AZ 85051  
(602) 347-2206 • wesdschools.org

**D** Wilson Head Start  
500 N. 30th Pl. • Phoenix, AZ 85008  
(602) 231-0373 • wsdk12.az.us

For Migrant & Seasonal Program Services contact:

**G** Chicanos Por La Causa Early Childhood Development (CPLC)  
1242 E. Washington St., Suite 200  
Phoenix, AZ 85034  
(602) 307-5818 • cplc.org

For Tribal Program Services contact:

**G** Cocopah Head Start  
14515 S. Veterans Drive  
Somerton, AZ 85350  
(928) 627-2811 • cocopah.com

**G** Colorado River Indian Tribes (CRIT) Head Start  
18026 Mohave Rd.  
Parker, AZ 85344 • (928) 662-4311  
crit-nsn.gov/critheadstart

**G** Gila River Indian Community (GRIC) Head Start  
P.O. Box 97 • Sacaton, AZ 85034  
(520) 562-3423 • gilariver.org

**G** Havasupai Head Start  
P.O. Box 130 • Supai, AZ 86435  
(928) 448-2821 • havasupai-nsn.gov

**G** Hopi Head Start  
P.O. Box 123 • Kykotsmobi, AZ 86039  
(928) 734-7125 • hopi-nsn.gov

**G** Hualapai Head Start  
P.O. Box 119  
Peach Springs, AZ 86434  
(928) 769-2522 • hualapai-nsn.gov

**G** Navajo Nation Head Start  
P.O. Box 3479 • Window Rock, AZ 86515  
(928) 871-6902 • navajohdstart.org

**G** Pascua Yaqui Head Start  
7474 S. Camino de Oeste  
Tucson, AZ 85757 • (520) 782-7150  
pascuayaqui-nsn.gov

**G** Quechan Head Start  
P.O. Box 1899 • Yuma, AZ 85366  
(760) 572-0263

**G** Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community (SRPMIC) Early Childhood Education Center (ECEC)  
10005 E. Osborn Rd.  
Scottsdale, AZ 85256  
(480) 362-2200  
srpmic-ed.org/ecec.asp

**G** San Carlos Apache Tribe (SCAT) Head Start Program  
P.O. Box 278 • San Carlos, AZ 85550  
(928) 475-2740  
scateducationdepartment.com/headstart.html

**G** Tohono O'odham Head Start  
P.O. Box 837 • Selis, AZ 85634  
(520) 383-7800  
tonation-nsn.gov

**G** White Mountain Apache Tribe (WMAT) Head Start Program  
P.O. Box 699 • Whiteriver, AZ 85941  
(928) 338-4938 • wmat.nsn.us

**G** indicates Grantee  
**D** indicates Delegate

“My daughter is beautiful, smart, clever and funny but she has a difficult time communicating. As a parent you want your child to be accepted by their peers and society for the person they are and you want your child to live a ‘normal’ and happy life. The Early Head Start inclusionary settings have made that a reality. She has only been attending Early Head Start for a few months and she is already showing improvement in her communication, adaptive, and personal social skills. I am excited to see her progress and I am grateful for the Early Head Start program for the love, encouragement, and support they have given my daughter.” —LINDSEY CASSIDY



azheadstart.org

The Power of Inclusion

Early intervention for young children provides a strong foundation for future learning. For some children from disadvantaged households, remediation of developmental delays can even be accomplished before kindergarten entry. Inclusion in Head Start and the opportunities it offers represent a tremendous advantage for children, families, schools and communities—including a monetary benefit on a statewide level. The average annual cost for public schools to educate a student is \$7,552 but that figure more than doubles to \$16,921 for a special education student.

Head Start eases the burden and expands the reach of public school districts and state-level organizations that are responsible for and continually seek to identify and serve children with developmental delays/disabilities. Head Start/EHS programs assist with Arizona's Child Find requirements by administering developmental screening in

collaboration with the child's parents within the first 45 days of program entry. Expansion of Early Head Start programs through EHS-Child Care Partnerships is enabling intervention for more infants and toddlers, and those who are eligible for intervention services can move seamlessly into special education when they reach age three.

Head Start provides research-based curricula and high-quality learning experiences that focus on the whole child, including bilingual support as well as special education. Those with developmental delays/disabilities receive support from a full range of quality service providers including mental health consultants, health and nutrition managers, disability coordinators, and professional development coaches. The program also partners with community-based support services, local school districts, special education services, and early intervention providers.

Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships (EHS-CCP)

In 2015, Arizona received \$13.3 million in Child Care Partnership grants that allow Early Head Start (EHS) programs to partner with local child care centers and family child care providers serving infants and toddlers from low-income families. Approximately 1,850 children are currently being served by Arizona EHS grantees with child care partnerships. EHS excels in providing qualified teachers and coaches who support a research-based curriculum and responsive caregiving along with broad-scale parent engagement activities and access to comprehensive services.

Partnering with Early Head Start makes it possible for child care programs to expand in scope and improve in quality. These partnerships provide training for teachers and family child care providers, facilitate working directly with families, and offer financial support for materials and environments. The most powerful statements about the far-reaching advantages of an

EHS partnership are the first-hand experiences of child care site directors and instructors:

“The program has been wonderful and I would be devastated to lose it. We never considered facility repairs because we never had the funding and now the environment is amazing. Lower ratios are enabling the children to play and interact with each other, and we can see them flourishing and preparing to move on to greater levels of learning. We have stronger relationships with our families and the opportunity to make a tremendous impact. Our employees feel a new sense of professionalism because they are working with real curriculum and assessment tools. Teachers are excited about home visits because they have learned so much and understand how to use the information to guide their teaching.”

—Dora Flores  
Site Director Great Explorers Childcare

Professional Development

AHSA works closely with the statewide higher education system to expand professional growth opportunities and forge agreements that provide unique benefits to Head Start staff. AHSA also hosts relevant trainings throughout the year, highlighted in 2016 by a presentation on the Arizona Mentor Network. Promoted by the Teaching/Technical Assistance (T/TA) Center, this monthly venue and learning community gives coaches, mentors, and education managers including Head Start/EHS staff and child care partners the opportunity to learn and share experiences that can enhance their work.

AHSA has begun actively promoting the feature-rich Early Childhood Workforce Registry under Arizona's Early Childhood Career and Professional Development Network. Head Start/EHS staff who participate in the Workforce Registry can access a constantly refreshed database of professional development opportunities, identify their strengths and needs, record trainings and credentials, access First Things First College Scholarships, share qualifications with employers, and have credentials verified for employers or licensing agencies.

Driving Quality Improvement

AHSA continually encourages and actively supports Head Start/EHS participation in statewide standards and tools designed to track, assess, and raise the quality of instruction and programs. The Quality First initiative under First Things First offers a statewide Tiered Quality Rating Improvement System for developing effective instructional strategies through classroom assessment, coaching, and star ratings. Teaching Strategies Gold® (TSG) has been adopted by the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) as the statewide data collection, with the AzEDS data standard enabling unique student identifiers for long-term tracking.



Currently, 193 Head Start/EHS sites are participating in TSG under the license of ADE, resulting in 9,027 active and 16,558 archived student portfolios. The ability to capture and aggregate this wealth of data makes it possible to track and assess the Head Start advantage through 12th grade and identify best practices for student success.

AHSA is also leading an initiative to compare CLASS™ (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) results for each program. Developed as an observational tool for assessing the quality of teacher-child interactions, CLASS can be useful for system-level evaluation but it also helps teachers become more effective. Program comparisons will enable AHSA to identify and facilitate professional development resources tailored around specific staff and program needs.

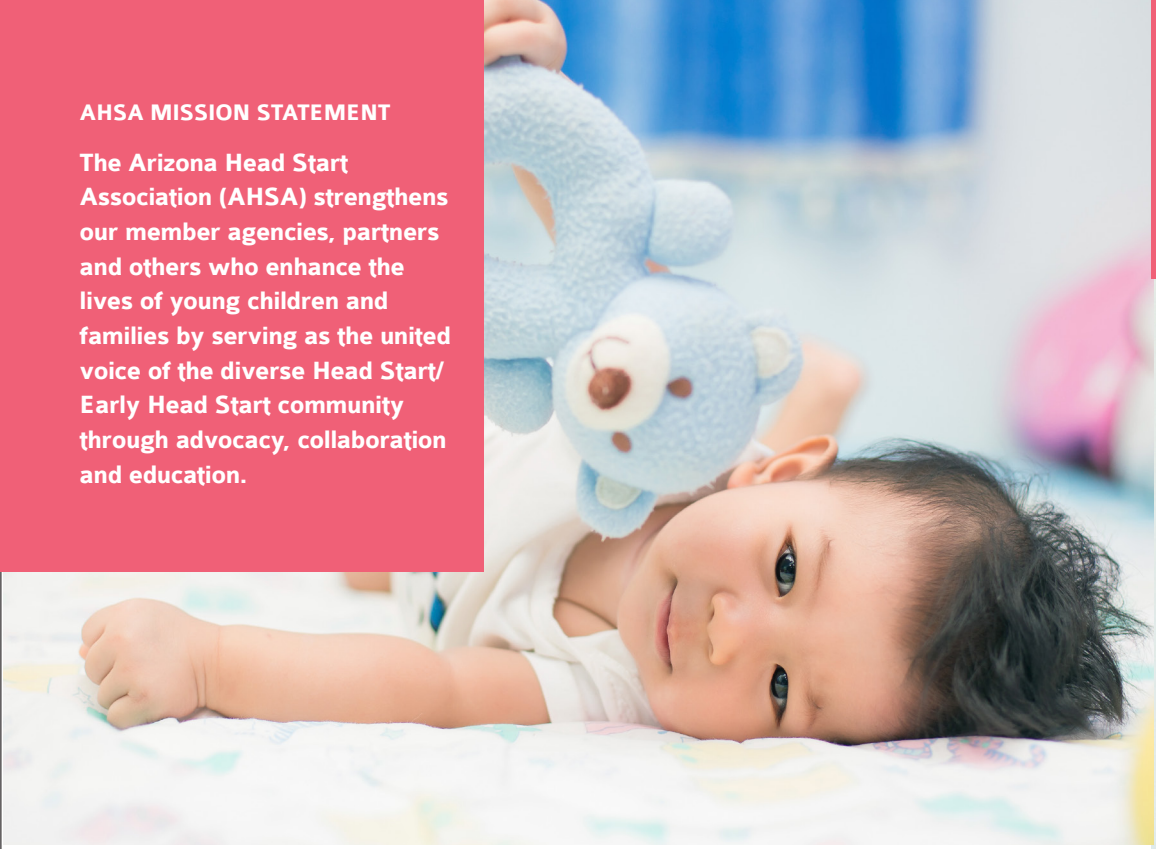
Head Start Staff

- 4,563 Head Start staff/contracted staff
- 863 preschool classroom teachers
- 805 preschool assistant teachers
- 431 EHS center-based teachers
- 316 home-based/Family Child Care staff
- 380 Family and Community Partnerships staff
- 18,508 volunteers serve Head Start/EHS



AHSA MISSION STATEMENT

The Arizona Head Start Association (AHSA) strengthens our member agencies, partners and others who enhance the lives of young children and families by serving as the united voice of the diverse Head Start/Early Head Start community through advocacy, collaboration and education.



AHSA Leadership and Statewide Initiatives

AHSA unifies the voice of Head Start at every Early Care and Education policy-making table, whether advocating for Head Start programs or supporting statewide initiatives. Working closely with the Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO), AHSA participates in strategic planning, issue clarification, resource identification, and implementation of state system development work. AHSA and HSSCO meet regularly with First Things First (FTF), a statewide initiative focused on meeting the needs of Arizona's young children and their families. The FTF Board of Directors serves as the State Early Learning Advisory Council, where the HSSCO director represents the Arizona Department of Education (ADE).

As a committed, engaged partner in the Arizona Early Childhood Alliance (AZEDA), AHSA joins 50 organizations statewide working to ensure access to high-quality early educational settings. AZEDA includes public, nonprofit, and private stakeholders dedicated to

developing programs, policies, and services that meet the needs of families and prepare young children for success in school and life. Even AHSA's quarterly meetings have become a "must-attend" forum where AHSA members and leaders welcome representatives from Arizona's Department of Economic Security, First Things First and Quality First, Read On Arizona, the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships community, home-care providers, and professional guests or trainers.

In addition to advisor committee presence and partnerships with statewide public and private organizations, AHSA maintains close ties with Arizona's departments of Education, Health Services, Child Safety, and Economic Security. AHSA also represents Arizona Head Start on a nationwide platform, communicating with the National Head Start Association on federal activities, budget, monitoring, resources, technical assistance, and coordination of efforts.



Arizona Head Start Association

2016 Annual Report

THE HEAD START ADVANTAGE  
For kids, for families—for communities



Arizona Head Start Association

PO Box 45483 • Phoenix, AZ 85064  
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