



2023 ANNUAL REPORT



Arizona Head Start Association

BUILDING BRIDGES: CREATING IMPACT

2023 Arizona Head Start An Overview



39

Head Start/
Early Head Start programs

1,574

Preschool classroom
teachers/teacher assistants

11,666

Enrolled preschool children
including migrant and seasonal

683

Infant toddler teachers

4,377

Enrolled infants and toddlers
including migrant and seasonal

HEAD START HISTORY

Launched in 1965, Head Start programs promote the school readiness of infants, toddlers, and preschool-aged children from at risk families. Services are provided in a variety of settings including centers, family childcare, and children's own home. Head Start programs also engage parents or other key family members in positive relationships, with a focus on family wellbeing. Parents participate in leadership roles, including having a say in program operations.

Head Start programs support children's growth in a positive learning environment through a variety of services, which include:

- **Early learning and development:** Through relationships with adults, play, and planned and spontaneous instruction, children grow in many aspects of development. Head Start programs work with families, school districts and other entities to facilitate a smooth transition to kindergarten for each child.
- **Health:** All children receive health screenings and nutritious meals, and programs connect families with medical, dental, and mental health services to ensure children are receiving the care and attention they need. Families also receive mental health consultation focused on each child's needs.
- **Family well-being:** Parents and families are offered program services to support family well-being and to achieve family goals, such as housing stability, continued education, and financial security. Programs support and strengthen parent-child relationships and engage families in the learning and development of their child.

Arizona Head Start Association MISSION

The mission of the AZHSA is to pursue excellence in collaboration with local agencies and partners that promotes educational achievements, family self-sufficiency, and generational progress. To achieve this, we advocate for the wellbeing of a high qualified workforce, including opportunities for state level engagement with key stake holders and elected leaders.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Arizona Head Start Association (AZHSA) is to provide a forum of empowerment and unification for the coalition of public and private organizations that administer Head Start programs and work to improve the lives of Arizona's children. We are passionate about innovative services that are grounded in equity, diversity, and inclusion.



MEET THE AZHSA 2023 EXECUTIVE TEAM



Executive Director: Jessica Rivera- García



Board President
Eve Del Real



Board Vice- President
Patricia Kirkland



Board Secretary
Janell Stringfellow



Board Treasurer
Shandeen Gomez

2023 AZHSA LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE

Parent, Family, Community and Engagement



Chair: Sonya Montoya
Northern Arizona
Council of
Governments



**Vice - Chair: Dulce
Quevedo**
Child Parent Centers



Chair: Elizabeth Soqui
Chicanos Por La Causa

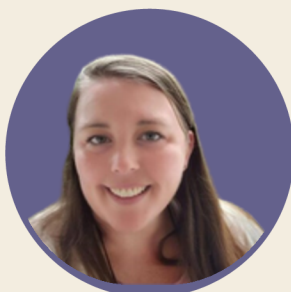


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Message from the Director

Dear AZHSA Members, Partners, and Friends,

As we embrace the theme “Building Bridges: Creating Impact,” I want to take a moment to reflect on our collective achievements and the vital work we’ve done together in our community.

Throughout the past year, we have focused on strengthening connections—between families, educators, and the community. These bridges we’ve built are essential in creating an inclusive environment where every child can thrive. From workshops that empower parents, to hands-on training for educators, each effort has contributed to building essential bridges in our community.

Through our partnerships, we’ve seen remarkable outcomes: increased access to resources, enhanced support for diverse family needs, and improved early education opportunities. Our commitment to these programs reflects our dedication to making a lasting impact. We recognize that our work is far from done, and we are dedicated to continuing our work in the community.

Together, we are not just building bridges; we are creating pathways for a brighter future for our children.

Thank you for your unwavering support and collaboration.

Jessica Rivera-Garcia

Jessica Rivera-Garcia, Director
Arizona Head Start Association

P.O Box 45483 • Phoenix, AZ. 85064 • 602-338-0449 • Website: azheadstart.org

Email: admin@azheadstart.org • Instagram: [@arizonaheadstart](https://www.instagram.com/arizonaheadstart)

Facebook: [@Azheadstart](https://www.facebook.com/Azheadstart) • X (Twitter): [@azhead_start](https://twitter.com/azhead_start)

LinkedIn: Arizona Head Start Association

Children

11,088

Enrolled Head Start children

3,664

Enrolled Early Head Start children

1,291

Enrolled ages 0-5 Migrant and Seasonal children



Families

5,395

Fathers engaged in their child's development through targeted activities

134

Early Head Start pregnant women

10,043

Parents/Guardian employed/ in job-training/school

14,786

Families



Family Assistance

7,526

Families received WIC*

6,939

Families received SNAP*

*Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

*Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)



Health Services

15,477

Children with health insurance

11,009

Children with preventative & primary health care

12,083

Children exited Head Start with up-to-date immunizations

124

Early Head Start pregnant women received prenatal health care



2023 NATIONAL AND STATEWIDE COLLABORATION



Members of AZHSA with Senator Mark Kelly

The National Head Start Association organizes two annual Leadership Institutes in Washington, D.C., with the goal of highlighting the crucial role Head Start serves in assisting our most at-risk children and families. This year, leaders and parents from Arizona Head Start had the chance to take part in both Institutes. The 2023 Leadership Institute concentrated on meetings with members of Congress, and offered professional development opportunities, including advocacy training. Arizona Head Start would like to thank all members of Congress that participated.

PARENT ADVOCACY COHORT TOURS THE AZ STATE CAPITOL MUSEUM



Representative Melody Hernandez welcomed the AZHSA parent advocacy cohort and partners from AZ Association for the Education of Young Children (AZAEYC) for a tour of the Arizona chambers. They had the opportunity for a behind-the-scenes look and to share their stories. It was inspiring for parents to be in the rooms where governors and representatives make crucial decisions for our community.

Building
CREATING IMPACT
Bridges

2023 NATIONAL AND STATEWIDE COLLABORATION

BLACK BOYS FILM SCREENING

In collaboration with AZAEYC, AZHSA hosted a professional development and equity training. This dynamic training allowed 60 early childhood educator staff to screen the film Black Boys. Participants engaged in panel discussion, heard from Governor Lewis of the Gila River Indian Community, and participated in breakout discussions about how to bring equity into their work with children and families.



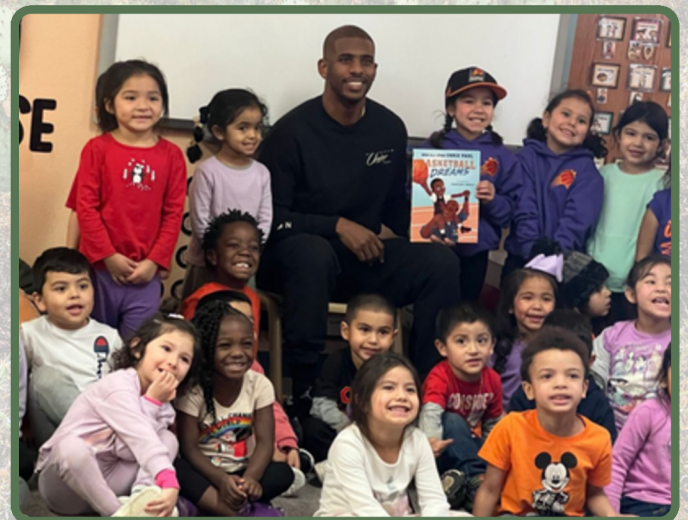
SUNS PLAYER CHRIS PAUL VISIT TO HEAD START CLASSROOM

SUNS basketball player Chris Paul visited the Booker T. Washington Head Start program to read his new book Basketball Dreams. He signed a book for each child. He brightened the day of the children, teachers and families. Literacy is crucial in Head Start as it lays the groundwork for future academic success and cognitive development. Early exposure to reading and writing enhances language skills, fosters creativity, and supports critical thinking. Additionally, participating in literacy activities encourages social interaction, communication, and emotional growth among children. By promoting family involvement in literacy, Head Start strengthens the connection between home and school, helping to prepare children for the challenges of formal education.



FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE VISITS A HEAD START CLASSROOM

Representative Raul Grijalva took time to visit a Child Parent Center Head Start classroom. Experiencing the program directly helps leaders better understand the importance of early childhood education, encouraging them to advocate for funding and policy support. These visits signal to the community that leaders care about early education and are committed to improving it



2023 EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

AZ REGISTRY COLLABORATION

AZHSA recognizes the importance of being a good collaborative partner. A significant piece of the early childhood system in Arizona is the Early Childhood Workforce Registry. Funded by First Things First, the registry allows early childhood providers to register and track professional development along a continuum of education. Although federal requirements do not mandate Head Start participation in the registry, AZHSA leadership supports ongoing efforts to participate.

Throughout the year, the AZHSA Early Childhood Development (ECD) Subcommittee worked to streamline the AZ Registry process with our state early childhood partners. This will allow providers to more easily register and offer data to identify knowledge and professional development gaps.

Looking forward, the Subcommittee will ensure that the workforce registry is regularly maintained. The Subcommittee strives to bring continued collaboration and professional development to the Early Childhood community.

ABOUT US!

AZHSA Early Childhood Development Sub-committee works to support both the children and staff within Arizona Head Start classrooms and the Head Start Workforce.

Education and Child Development



960

Center-based classes operated

169

Number of home visitors

47

Family Child Care providers

7,943

Family involvement in child's screening and assessment results

7,903

Number of Dual Language Learners (DLL)



2023 PARENT, FAMILY, COMMUNITY & ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

In 2023, the Parent, Family Community & Engagement Committee (PFCE) concentrated on enhancing partnerships and program information sharing. Last year focused on several key initiatives including a Board and Committee Listings and a matrix of service issues. The committee created a comprehensive network of representation across Arizona to support families in vulnerable situations. This includes collaborations with entities such as Homeless Coalitions, SHIFT Program Connections, Child Abuse Prevention Committees, and Foster Children Education Collaboratives. The committee also maintains a dynamic list of challenges faced by Head Start programs throughout Arizona. This matrix has garnered the attention of community partners and has increased collective awareness of shared resources and opportunities.

Building CREATING IMPACT Bridges



DES Partners with Head Start to Connect SNAP CAN Participants with Child Care

Family Services

3,699

Received emergency/crisis intervention

1,319

Received mental health services

6,458

Received education on preventative medical and oral health

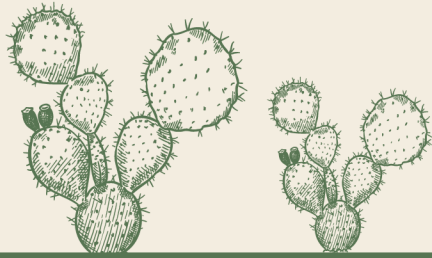


After a year and a half of collaboration, the Arizona Department of Economic Security and The Arizona Head Start Association announced on March 22, 2023, a new partnership. The partnership aims to connect individuals participating in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Career Advancement Network (SNAP CAN) employment and training programs to Head Start programs through a referral process. As a result of this partnership, Head Start programs will now receive a list of families with children eligible for Head Start who are also receiving SNAP. This initiative will help families connect with the Head Start program and will assist the program with recruitment.

2023 Integrated Health and Safety Committee



Head Start works to address health equity in early childhood. Head Start communities experience higher rates of poverty, limited access to healthcare, inadequate nutrition, and environmental stressors, which can severely impact early development. Ensuring health equity means that all children, regardless of their socioeconomic, racial, or geographic background, have the resources and support necessary for a healthy start in life.



Health Services At-a-Glance



14,654

Children with Continuous Dental Care

6,458

Family Education Preventive Medical/ Oral Health



Disabilities & Mental Health Committee

Mental Health and Disabilities Services

1,251

Preschool Children with an IEP*

*Individualized Education Program (IEP)

375

Infant/Toddler Children with an IFSP*

*Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)

According to the National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations

What is the Pyramid Model?

The Pyramid Model is a framework that incorporates evidence-based practices aimed at fostering the healthy social and emotional growth of young children.

Is the Pyramid Model a curriculum?

While the Pyramid Model complements the program's curriculum, it is not a curriculum in itself.

Who utilizes the Pyramid Model?

The Pyramid Model offers guidance for:

- Early childhood special education staff
- Early intervention professionals
- Early childhood educators
- Families

The state of Arizona has created a statewide leadership team to help programs implement the pyramid model. Jessica Rivera-Garcia represented Head Start on the Leadership Team.



Thank You

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The Head Start

PLEDGE

I believe every child can succeed;

I believe my work in Head Start helps children and families succeed;

I believe every vulnerable child should be served by Head Start.

I pledge to work together with the families I serve, my community partners, and my colleagues;

I pledge to work together to ensure this nation honors its commitment to vulnerable children;

I pledge to be part of the untiring voice that will not be quiet until every vulnerable child is served by Head Start.

GOVERNANCE: 2023 AZHSA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Washington Elementary
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Committee Chair - PFCE
Northern Arizona Council
of Governments

William Burns

Parent Representative
Child Parent Centers

Yatin Dua

Head Start Director
Catholic Charities
Westside Head Start

2023 ARIZONA HEAD START PROGRAMS

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

G Northern Arizona Council of Governments
(928) 774-9504
nacog.org EHS/HS

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

G Child-Parent Centers, Inc.
(520) 882-0100
childparentcenters.org EHS/CCP/HS

For programs in Gila & Pinal Counties contact:

G Pinal Gila Community Child Services, Inc.
(888) 723-7321
pgccs.org EHS/HS

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

G Western Arizona Council of Governments
(928) 782-1886
wacog.com

For programs in Maricopa County contact:

G Catholic Charities Westside Head Start
(623) 486-9868
CatholicCharitiesAz.org EHS/HS

G Child Crisis Arizona
(480) 304-9501
childcrisisaz.org EHS

G Chicanos Por La Causa - Early Head Start
(602) 716-0156
cplc.org EHS/CCP/HS

G City of Phoenix Education Division
(602) 262-4040
phoenix.gov/humanservices/
program/head-start EHS/CCP/HS

G Maricopa County Human Services Early Education Division
(602) 372-3700
maricopa.gov/3516/Early-Education-Programs EHS/CCP/HS

G Southwest Human Development Head Start
(602) 560-0000
swhd.org/program/head-start EHS/CCP/HS

G Urban Strategies, Early Head Start
602-353-5317
earlyheadstart.urbanstrategies.us/
arizona/

S Alhambra School District Head Start
(602) 246-5155
alhambraesd.org

S Booker T. Washington Child Development Center, Inc.
(602) 252-4743
btwchild.org

S Deer Valley Head Start
(623) 445-4991
dvusd.org

S Fowler Head Start
(623) 474-7260
fesd.org

S Greater Phoenix Urban League Head Start
(602) 276-9305
gphxul.org

D Washington Elementary School District
(602) 347-4806
wedschools.org

For Migrant & Seasonal Program Services contact:

G Chicanos Por La Causa Early Childhood Development
(602) 307-5818
cplc.org CCP

For Tribal Program Services contact:

G Cocopah Head Start
(928) 627-2811
cocopah.com

G Colorado River Indian Tribes Head Start
(928) 662-4311
crit-nsn.gov/critheadstart

G Gila River Indian Community Head Start
(520) 562-6901
gilariver.org

G Havasupai Head Start
(928) 448-2821
havasupai-nsn.gov

G Hopi Head Start
(928) 734-3512
hopi-nsn.gov

G Hualapai Tribe Head Start
(928) 769-2522
hualapai-nsn.gov

G Navajo Nation Head Start
(928) 871-6902
navajoheadstart.org

G Pascua Yaqui Head Start
(520) 838-7150
pascuayaqui-nsn.gov

G Quechan Head Start
(760) 572-0263
quechantribe.com/departments-
head-start.html

G Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community Early Childhood Education Center
(480) 362-2200
www.saltriverschools.org

G San Carlos Apache Tribe Head Start Program
(928) 475-2740
sancarlosapache.com

G Tohono O'odham Head Start
(520) 383-7800
tonation-nsn.gov

G White Mountain Apache Tribe Head Start Program
(928) 338-4938
whitemountainapache.org

G Indicates Grantee
S Indicates Subgrantees



Arizona Head Start Association

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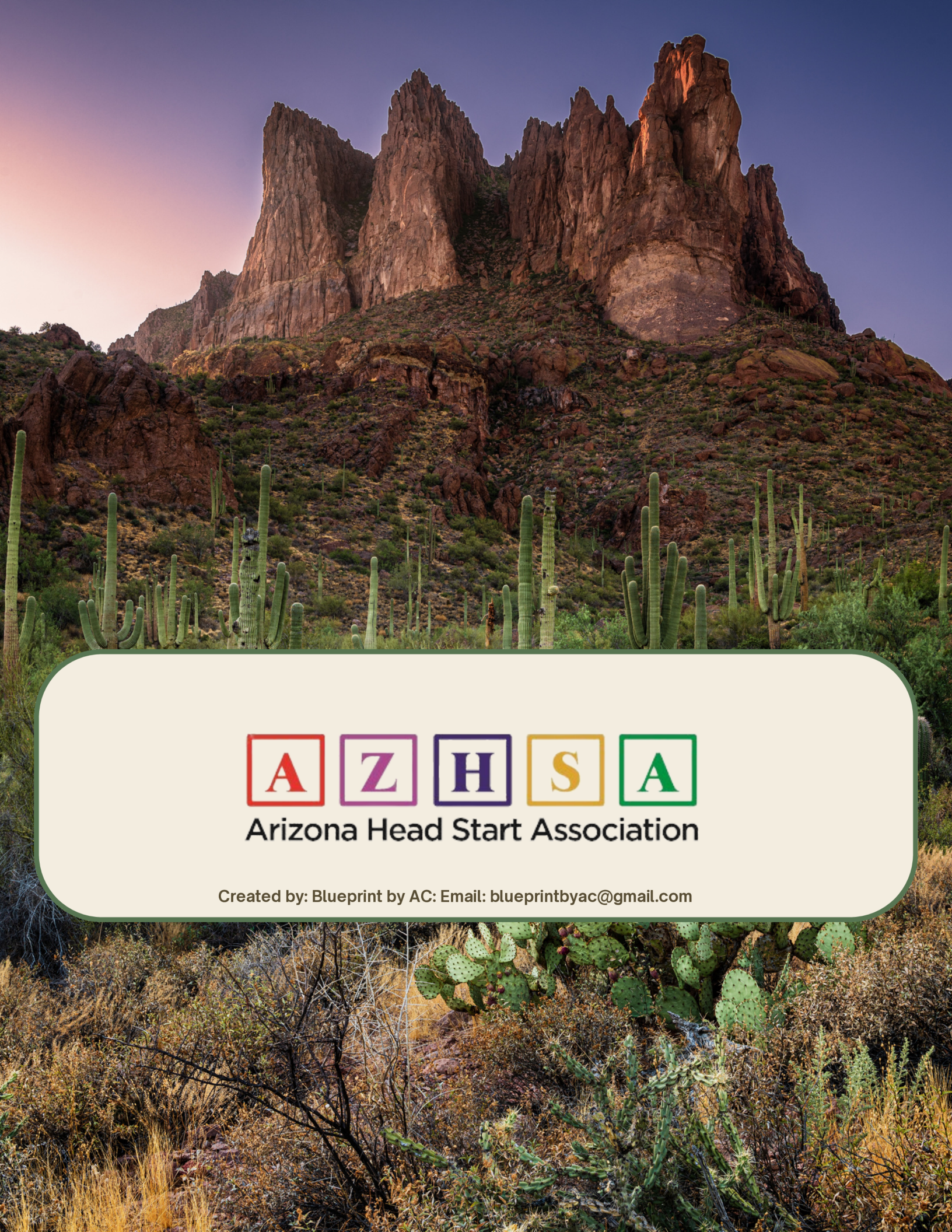
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