

## A Message from the President

AHSA Members and Friends,

We proudly present this 2013 Annual Report as a summary of all that AHSA has achieved, but also as a tribute to the accomplishments of our dedicated Head Start member organizations. Page after page, you will see the continuation and expansion of quality programs and services along with promising initiatives. Several collaborations toward Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with statewide organizations share the goal of helping Head Start better serve Arizona's most vulnerable population. Already finalized in 2013, AHSA's MOU with Grand Canyon University focuses on professional development for Head Start staff, offering a world of benefits including tuition discounts.

AHSA can also look back over 2013 as a year of organizational growth and refinement, resulting in a new mission statement that focuses intensely on Advocacy, Collaboration, and Education as our core activities. More than ever, we are grateful for the guidance of our dedicated volunteer Board of Directors and the tireless contributions of committee chairs and committee members. We also want to thank the dedicated partners throughout the state and across Arizona's service network who work with AHSA in creating solutions, meeting critical needs, and helping Head Start give our children a chance to thrive and succeed—in school and in life.

Lastly, I want to express my personal appreciation for each and every Head Start member organization as well as the staff and countless volunteers we proudly serve. AHSA is honored to unify your voice, to advocate and collaborate on your behalf, and to provide educational opportunities that further your success. You have our respect and admiration each and every day, as you go about quietly and surely improving the lives of Arizona's children and families.

*Mindy Zapata*

Mindy Zapata, President  
Arizona Head Start Association

### AHSA Leadership 2012-3 Program Year

Director, Stephen Honeyestewa

#### Executive Committee

Natalie Alvarez/Mindy Zapata, President;  
Alecia Jackson, Vice President; Kristin  
Andrew, Treasurer; and Larry Campbell,  
Secretary

#### Committee Chairs

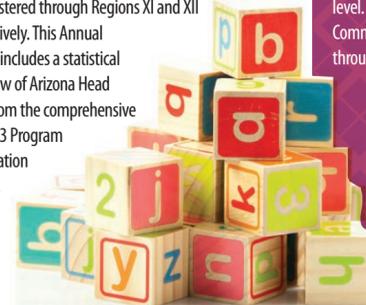
Early Care and Education, Cindy English;  
Health & Nutrition, Jen Gemma;  
Disabilities and Mental Health,  
Judy Bell; Professional Development,  
Lori Jablonsky; Family & Community  
Partnerships, Nina Williams



## America's School Readiness Program

The National Head Start program was launched in 1965 to provide comprehensive education, health and family services to poverty-level children and their families. Local grantees receive federal funding for Head Start (HS), Migrant/Seasonal Head Start (MSHS), American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN), and Early Head Start (EHS) programs, the latter serving pregnant women and children from birth to age three.

The Arizona network of organizations that administer HS and EHS programs include Tribal governments, local municipalities, non-profit agencies, and school districts. Federal funds are granted to these community-based programs through the Office of Head Start (OHS), a division of the Administration for Children and Families within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. National administration of Head Start grants is divided into regions, with the San Francisco Region IX Office overseeing Arizona grantees. The Arizona Tribal and Migrant/Seasonal programs are administered through Regions XI and XII respectively. This Annual Report includes a statistical overview of Arizona Head Start from the comprehensive 2012-13 Program Information Report.



## Arizona Head Start Association

The Arizona Head Start Association (AHSA) provides a forum of empowerment and unification for Arizona's Head Start programs. AHSA reaches far beyond its membership, creating and contributing to collaborative partnerships across the Early Care and Education community and every governmental level. Led by a Director and a volunteer Executive Committee, AHSA integrates service delivery through the key committees of Early Care and Education, Health & Nutrition, Disabilities & Mental Health, Professional Development, and Family & Community Partnerships. Along with membership dues, funding for AHSA projects is provided in part by the Arizona Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO) through a grant from the Administration for Children and Families.

### A Message from AHSA Director Stephen Honeyestewa

In a state where one in five of Arizona's families live below the poverty line, Head Start and Early Head Start programs are crucial to the hope of a brighter future. It is my privilege to serve as the director of the organization that provides a unified voice for Arizona's Head Start community and works diligently to support its success.

Our Head Start programs dealt with tremendous challenges in 2013 as sequestration, the automatic spending cuts across the federal budget, forced cut-backs in programs and services. However, 2013 will also be remembered for the unprecedented AHSA Forum, hosting two national leaders who came solely to collaborate on solutions to the critical challenges facing Head Start in Arizona. AHSA is especially grateful for the work of Amy Corriveau, Head Start State Collaboration Director, for giving AHSA the opportunity to raise that awareness on such influential levels.

In the opening months of 2013, AHSA took the time to evaluate the many ways our leaders and committees support Arizona's Head Start community. The result was a new mission, along with a strategic workplan that promises to increase AHSA's influence in state and national policy building and systems building. AHSA's very committee structure is being realigned to more effectively meet these and other far-reaching goals. In 2014, our Executive Committee will be working closely with three standing committees in carrying out AHSA's mission: Early Childhood Development; Integrated Health and Safety; and Parent, Family and Community Engagement.

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the passion, dedication, and hard work demonstrated by our member Head Start organizations and all those across the statewide landscape who partner with AHSA. Working together, we can overcome the barriers to success so that every child in Arizona has a chance to enter school eager, healthy and ready to learn.



### Positive Statewide Impact

- Arizona Head Start programs serve 21,452 at-risk children and 20, 258 families
- Federal Head Start grants bring more than \$140 million into Arizona's economy
- Arizona Head Start agencies generate more than \$35 million in local community in-kind contributions
- Arizona Head Start programs employ more than 4,000 individuals

### Arizona Head Start at a Glance

- 21,452 total Head Start/EHS children
- 18,489 Head Start preschool children
- 2,963 EHS children from birth to 3 years
- 833 Head Start preschool classes

## National, State and Regional Representation

AHSA works closely with the Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO) to accomplish state system work. Housed in the Arizona Department of Education, HSSCO leads collaborative initiatives, contracting with AHSA to carry out those goals and objectives. AHSA directors and committees also support HSSCO's statewide strategic planning, from clarifying issues to identifying available resources. AHSA and HSSCO meet regularly with First Things First (FTF), a statewide initiative that addresses the needs of Arizona's young children and their families. The FTF Board of Directors serves as the State Advisory Council, combining Early Care and Education leaders and government representatives with an assembly of advisory committees. AHSA maintains a presence on advisory committees and participates in a variety of FTF activities.

Regionally, AHSA raises the visibility of Arizona Head Start at meetings of the Head Start Region IX Association serving Arizona, Nevada, California, Hawaii and the Outer Pacific Islands. AHSA's presence at the table introduces issues that are unique to Arizona and affords opportunities to learn about challenges, solutions and best practices in other states. AHSA also maintains strong ties to the National Head Start Association, frequently communicating on federal activities, budget, monitoring, resources, technical assistance and coordination of efforts.

### Statewide Partnerships

Serving as a unifying presence, AHSA connects the Head Start community with state agencies and important players within Arizona's Early Care and Education system. AHSA collaborates closely with Arizona's Department of Health Services, the Department of Education, the Department of Economic Security, and First Things First. Many other private and public organizations enjoy an active partnership with AHSA including the Arizona Association for the Education of Young Children, Arizona Early Intervention Program, Children's Action Alliance, Protecting Arizona's Family Coalition, and the Arizona Child Care Association. The spirit of cooperation and enhanced communication links fostered by these alliances enable all stakeholders to meet challenges more effectively by maximizing resources and eliminating duplication of effort.

### Head Start Outreach

Throughout the year, AHSA continues to represent and strengthen the voice of Head Start at annual events and forums. In addition to sponsoring one of the Southwest's finest Mental Health Conferences and now the first annual AHSA Health and Wellness Symposium, AHSA provided information and/or presentations at a wide variety of gatherings.

Spanning governmental levels and addressing a number of critical issues, these events include First Things First Early Childhood Summit, Arizona Association for the Education of Young Children, Coordinated School Health Conference, Arizona Coalition to End Homelessness Conference, Celebrate the Young Child Conference, Children's Obesity Conference, The EAR Foundation of Arizona Seminar, and the Intertribal Circle of Caring and Sharing.

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



## ADVOCACY

### National Head Start Spotlight on Arizona

The Arizona Head Start Association Forum occurring on September 13, 2013 hosted two national figures for an unprecedented gathering at the Burton Barr Library in Phoenix. This groundbreaking event highlighted the critical role of Head Start in Arizona and featured Libby Doggett, the newly appointed Deputy Assistant Secretary of Early Learning for the United State Department of Education, who was joined by Linda Smith, Deputy Assistant Secretary and Inter-Departmental Liaison for Early Childhood Development for the Administration for Children and Families at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The Forum provided a dynamic platform where these two national leaders could meet with the AHSA Executive Council as well as representatives from Head Start grantees/delegates from across the state to address Arizona's most pressing issues. The intention for the gathering was to facilitate national and statewide collaboration leading to improved school readiness with a focus on kindergarten transitions and enhanced student outcomes. Recognition goes to Amy Corriveau, Deputy Assistant Associated Superintendent and Head Start State Collaboration Director under the Arizona Department of Education, as the driving force behind this high-level opportunity to raise awareness about the challenges facing Arizona's most vulnerable population and provide support to those who are dedicated to improving their lives.

### Head Start's Homeless Population

During the 2012-13 program year, 211 Head Start families acquired housing and nearly 1,040 homeless children and their families had the advantage of Head Start programs and services. AHSA works closely with Frank Migali, State Coordinator for Homeless Education at the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) to advocate for Head Start's homeless population, championing initiatives and programs designed to serve and ultimately reduce Arizona's homelessness. AHSA joins ADE each year at the annual Arizona Coalition to End Homelessness conference, where connections to liaisons and other partners who serve the homeless community provide critical resource and referral options for Head Start children and families.



### AHSA Mission Statement

The Arizona Head Start Association

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.

## Arizona Head Start Association

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azheadstart.org



## COLLABORATION and EDUCATION

### Teaching Strategies Gold

AHSA continues to provide a forum of guidance and assistance to statewide Head Start programs as they learn to use Arizona's new data-driven progress monitoring tool, Teaching Strategies Gold. Launched in public preschools, TSG provides a standardized framework across Arizona's Early Care and Educational community for assessing, planning, and sharing with families. Throughout the program year, AHSA facilitated TSG across Arizona's Head Start community, from troubleshooting and answering questions to suggesting changes that make the system easier to adopt and use. AHSA also hosted two formal TSG training sessions in 2013 that featured state and national TSG leaders. Data from Arizona Head Start programs is now flowing into the TSG statewide system in preparation for compilation and evaluation.

### AHSA Communications

Communicating the needs and promoting the interests of Arizona's Head Start community to a broader audience is one of AHSA's strengths, including a far-reaching monthly email newsletter filled with news, updates, announcements, and active links for expanded content. AHSA's website provides another information-rich platform that serves AHSA members and the entire statewide Head Start community with vital resources, contacts and services.

### AHSA Quarterly Meetings and Trainings

Quarterly gatherings give AHSA members unparalleled opportunities to learn, share, collaborate, and benefit from direct access to state, regional, and national guest speakers. The three-day schedule begins on Wednesday with professional trainings provided by the statewide Training/Technical Assistance system. Thursday is devoted to a general membership meeting and committee work, while Friday is reserved for the AHSA Board Meeting.

### AHSA Sponsorship Program

Non-Head-Start individuals, groups and companies are invited to participate in the AHSA Sponsorship Program, which awards valuable benefits in exchange for an annual commitment in levels from \$500 to \$5000. In 2013, Grand Canyon University joined the ranks of loyal sponsors like Lakeshore Learning Materials and the Kaplan Early Learning Company. Plugging into AHSA's vast statewide network enables a sponsor to be highly visible to thousands of passionate people who are actively involved in Early Care and Education.

# Arizona Head Start Programs

G indicates Grantee D indicates Delegate

- 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 Crisis Nursery**  
402 N. 24th St. • Phoenix, AZ 85008  
(602) 889-6165 • crisisnurseryphx.org
  - G City of Phoenix Human Services Head Start**  
200 W. Washington, 19th Floor  
Phoenix, AZ 85003 • (602) 262-4040  
phoenix.gov/humanservices/index.html
  - G Maricopa County Head Start Zero – Five Program**  
234 N. Central Ave. • Phoenix, AZ 85004  
(480) 464-9669  
http://myhsd.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. (BTW)**  
1519 E. Adams • Phoenix, AZ 85034  
(602) 252-4743 • btwchild.org
  - D Catholic Charities Westside Head Start**  
7400 W. Olive, Suite 10  
Peoria, AZ 85345 • (623) 486-9868  
CatholicCharitiesaz.org
  - D Deer Valley Head Start**  
20402 North 15th Ave.  
Phoenix, AZ 85027  
(623) 445-4991 • dvsud.org
  - D Fowler Head Start**  
6250 W. Durango • Phoenix, AZ 85043  
(623) 474-7260 • fesda.org
  - D Greater Phoenix Urban League (GPUL) Head Start**  
1402 S. 7th Ave. • Phoenix, AZ 85007  
(602) 276-9305 • gphxl.org
  - D Murphy Head Start**  
2615 W. Buckeye Rd.  
Phoenix, AZ 85009  
(602) 353-5181 • msdaz.org
  - D Roosevelt School District Head Start**  
4615 South 22nd St.  
Phoenix, AZ 85040  
(602) 232-4919 • rsd.k12.az.us
  - D Washington Elementary School District**  
8430 N. 39th Ave.  
Phoenix, AZ 85051  
(602) 347-2206 • westschools.org
  - D Wilson Head Start**  
500 N. 30th Pl. • Phoenix, AZ 85008  
(602) 231-0373 • wsd.k12.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 85147  
(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 • Kykotsmovi, 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) 838-7150 • 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 • Sells, 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) 388-4938 • wmat.nsn.us



**Arizona Head Start Association**

PO Box 45483 • Phoenix, AZ 85064  
602-338-0449 • [azheadstart.org](http://azheadstart.org)



## Health and Nutrition

### 7th Annual AHSAs Birth to Five Mental Health Symposium

In 2013, Arizona Head Start Association celebrated seven years of hosting one of Arizona's premier mental health events. Approximately 130 participants gathered at the Desert Willow Conference Center in Phoenix on October 17-18 for a full lineup of quality programs based around the theme "Social Emotional Development—the Foundation for School Readiness." The symposium drew Head Start and non-Head Start attendees from Arizona's Early Care and Education community, including nearly twenty vendors with relevant exhibits and six participants who received scholarships.

The event continued the open structure that has been so successful in past years, giving attendees the opportunity to choose from five different sessions at any given time. Most presentations were offered more than once to ease scheduling conflicts, and the sign-up process was quick and easy with online registration available at the AHSAs website. Many attendees return to the symposium year after year, praising the caliber of professional education as well as the exceptional opportunity to network, collaborate, and learn more about statewide efforts and resources. Outstanding volunteer presenters, both local and out-of-state, gave attendees the chance to engage with experts on one relevant topic after another.

Event Chair Juan Carlos Tarango expressed his thanks to the lineup of exceptional presenters but also to the AHSAs team members who labored behind the scenes in planning and executing the symposium. In addition to Cynthia Jones who led logistics and Judy Bell who handled registration, the presenter sub-committee included Toni Limbrick, Maria Pimentel, Meryl Warda, Michelle Thornton, and Dianna Posta.

### AHSAs Health and Wellness Symposium

The first annual AHSAs Health and Wellness Symposium was held on April 12, 2013 at the Roman Catholic Diocese of Phoenix in downtown Phoenix. Featuring several expert speakers on key health topics of vital interest to Arizona's Head Start community, the full-day training was available to family support specialists, delegates/grantees, teachers, and program staff.

The morning agenda focused on Head Start screenings and immunizations, while the afternoon was devoted to nutrition and the Empower Program under the Arizona Department of Health Services. Based on the belief that Early Care and Education (ECE) providers are in a unique position to empower young children with habits that can keep them healthy for life, the Empower Program revolves around a set of 10 standards for ECE licensed facilities. Although Head Start programs already follow Empower principles, the training reinforced that commitment and supported Head Start's leading role in establishing healthy practices throughout the Early Care and Education network.

### Healthy Head Start Children

- 93% children with health insurance
- 97% children with medical home (continually accessible health care)
- 98% children up-to-date on all possible immunizations
- 89% children with up-to-date preventative/primary health care
- 98% children with dental home (continuously accessible dental care)
- 87% preschool children completed dental exams
- 91% children requiring dental care received treatment
- 96% children with at least one primary disability received special services

## Parent and Family Engagement

### Parent Leadership Institute

Approximately 50 parents and staff from Head Start and Early Head Start programs throughout Arizona convened at the 4th Annual Parent Leadership Institute in January of 2013. This free event was sponsored by AHSAs and the Head Start State Collaboration Office, providing a full day of lively interaction and instruction on topics that ranged from education to health, safety, nutrition, and the importance of regular exercise. Presentation titles included Supporting Math at Home, Safety at Home, Shopping Matters, Taking the Early Learning Standards Home, Money Making Sense, and Let's Move and Groove.

Attendance at the Parent Leadership Institute is always free of charge. However, each Head Start program is advised to select participants who have already demonstrated a high level of involvement with the hope that they will be passionate and enthusiastic about sharing what they have learned. Attendees returned to their respective programs with supportive materials and community resources.

### Foster Care Collaboration

AHSAs is working closely with statewide partners that include Arizona's Department of Economic Security, Department of Education, Maricopa County Head Start, and Southwest Human Development Head Start in developing a Foster Care Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Statewide Foster Care partners are sharing their concerns about the unique needs of foster care children and the complexity of providing early childhood education services. The Head Start representatives are bringing issues of federal guidelines to the table that affect enrollment, particularly the ability to serve children living in specific areas.

Both Head Start and state leaders are committed to this Foster Care Collaboration effort with a goal of paving a solid path toward a formal MOU. The desired outcome would serve all stakeholders by making Head Start and Early Head Start program information more accessible to foster parents. The proposed Foster Care MOU would also enhance the ability of Arizona's Head Start community ability to spread the word about available opportunities and advocate for open enrollment for foster children.



### Healthy Head Start Families

- 10,087 Head Start families received at least one family service
- 1,982 EHS families received at least one family service
- 145 pregnant women served by Early Head Start
- 211 Head Start/EHS homeless families acquired housing during enrollment year

Family services include mental health assistance, dental health care, assistance with housing, parenting education, smoking cessation, job education, and more

## Women, Infants and Children Collaboration

Exciting groundwork is being established toward a Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) through a collaborative effort between the Arizona Head Start Association and the Arizona Department of Health. WIC is a national program that provides states with federal grants for supplemental foods, healthcare referrals, and nutrition education for low-income pregnant/postpartum women as well as for children up to age five who are at nutritional risk.

With so many Head Start families receiving WIC benefits and attending WIC clinics, this MOU would enable Head Start programs to access a master list of critical health information for the children they serve. A draft copy of the WIC MOU is currently in the hands of the Arizona Department of Education for continuing interpretation and review by legal experts on federal guidelines and privacy issues posed by the Health Insurance Portability Account Act (HIPAA).



## Professional Development

### AHSAs-Sponsored Trainings

AHSAs directly supports professional education for Head Start staff by hosting timely presentations at AHSAs Quarterly Meeting and Training events. The Arizona State Teaching/Technical Assistance (TTA) Center, a member of the Office of Head Start TTA System and the Arizona Department of Education collaborated with AHSAs to provide a full-day of training on Math, Literacy, and Teaching Strategies GOLD on May 15, 2013. Participants engaged in dialog and activities that met a number of objectives from defining language development and designing a dialogue-rich classroom to exploring GOLD math activities including time-saving shortcuts and tips for teachers.

In September, AHSAs once again collaborated with the Arizona State TTA Center and the National Center on Program Management and Fiscal Operations to provide a comprehensive workshop on Building Data Systems. Head Start attendees had the opportunity for intensive exploration of the ways that data systems analysis supports program and school readiness goals. Participants collected, aggregated, analyzed, and utilized data for planning with an overriding goal of strengthening management systems through total staff engagement.

### Head Start Staff

- 1,012 Head Start/EHS teachers
- 826 preschool teachers
- 800 assistant preschool teachers
- 186 center-based EHS teachers
- 21,400 volunteers serve Arizona's Head Start programs
- 16,300 volunteers are Head Start parents
- 30% of Head Start staff is Head Start parents
- 89% of preschool classrooms have at least one teacher meeting degree/credential requirements
- 95% of EHS classroom teachers meet degree/credential requirements

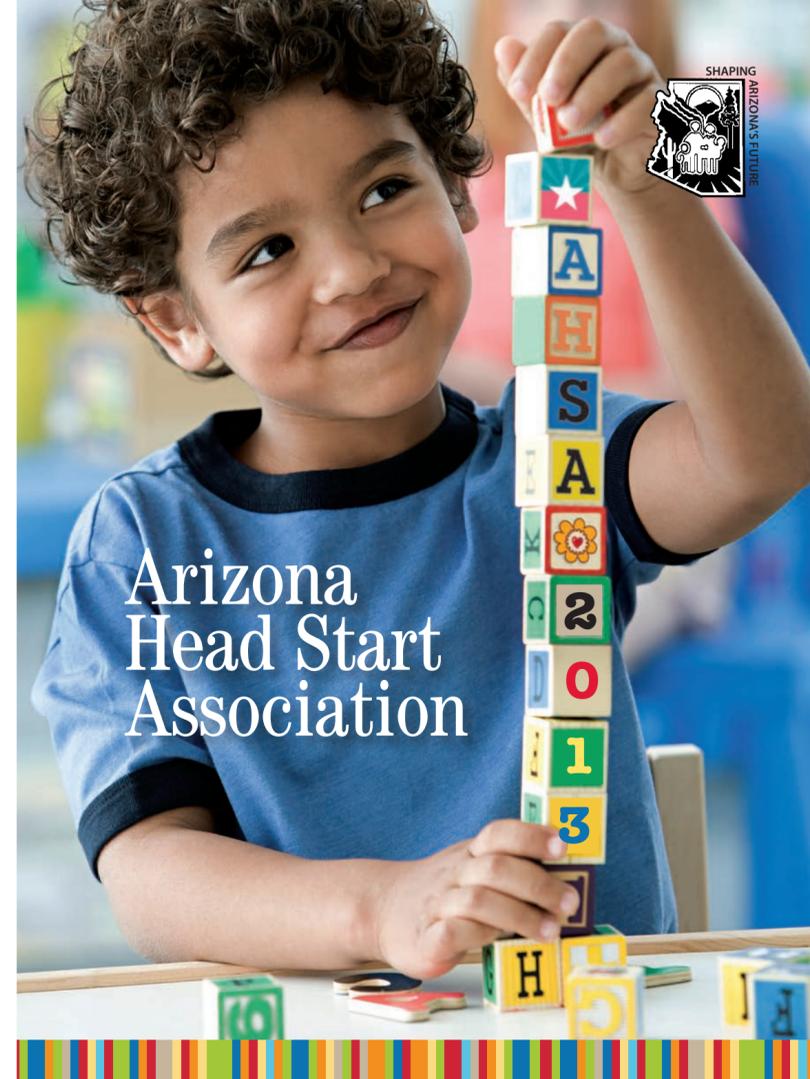
### Family Development Credentialing

AHSAs played a leading role in bringing Family Development Credentialing (FDC) to Arizona, a program that prepares family service workers to identify and focus on strengths in helping families set and reach goals for healthy self-reliance. Since its 2009 launch, the FDC program has continued to expand. In 2012, AHSAs project leader Sonya Montoya received additional training at the University of Connecticut that enabled her to establish the FDC Leadership Credential in Arizona. Ten participants took part in that training in 2013, while two other Head Start leaders were qualified to join Sonya in the development of the first FDC Statewide Leadership Training for the 2013-14 school year. Two Arizona Head Start programs now offer the 90-hour FDC Skills course, incorporating multiple models developed to meet their Head Start program as well as community needs.

### Career Advancement

AHSAs continually advocates for professional advancement opportunities for Head Start employees, including representing the voice of Arizona's Head Start community when staffing needs are being considered for statewide initiatives and/or funding. On the individual level, AHSAs website provides a comprehensive database of degree and certification programs with contacts and funding opportunities as well as a Career Center with current job postings. AHSAs maintains close ties with Arizona's higher education system to ensure the availability of relevant, affordable, workable programs.

New doors of opportunity opened in 2013 with a Memorandum of Understanding between AHSAs and the private liberal arts institution of Grand Canyon University, making it possible for AHSAs to join the Canyon Educational Participant (CEP) program. AHSAs new CEP status allows staff and employees of Arizona's Head Start community to receive a variety of benefits at no cost or at significant savings, from tuition discounts to free educational development and a wide variety of support services that include coaching and mentoring. The CEP program allows for cohort program requests to support continuing education and consultations on new higher education degree opportunities.



Arizona Head Start Association



Advocacy Collaboration Education

SHAPING ARIZONA'S FUTURE