



First Things First State Fiscal Years 2024-2027 Strategic Plan



FTF Strategic Planning Process





Next Level of FTF Excellence

The FTF state Board is committed to an FTF-centric strategic plan that:

- is clear, concise, data-informed, equity- and outcome-focused ensuring equity in all FTF's work;
- coordinates, collaborates and seeks to achieve collective impact with other state agencies;
- includes appropriate metrics for informative and accountability purposes; and
- provides a path for a more stable and sustainable funding structure.



FTF Values

1. **Arizona's children, birth to age 5, and their families are our central focus.** We provide the best opportunities to prepare Arizona's children for success in school and life, while ensuring each child's well-being.
2. **Equity-Focused** – We acknowledge, address and work to solve the unique challenges facing many children and their families.
3. **Innovative and Continuously Improving** – We are flexible, open and do what is best for children and their families.
4. **Accountable** – We demonstrate that our work truly improves the lives of children and their families.
5. **Strong Stewards** – We demonstrate transparency and sound financial management of public and private funds and advocate for additional investments in early childhood development and health to address unmet needs.
6. **Diverse and Inclusive** – Our partners, regional council members, staff and Board are essential to the equitable delivery of the mission. We are inclusive and strive to reflect the diversity of our state. We treat everyone with dignity and respect.
7. **Collaborative and Cooperative** – The success of our work depends on others and we maintain a diverse, inclusive and equitable culture of strong collaboration and cooperation both internally and externally.



SFY 2024-2027 Strategic Plan Guiding Principles

1. With an emphasis on the whole child, FTF will serve Arizona's children:
 - birth to age 5, and their families and caregivers,
 - across diverse socio-economic, geographic, cultural, and educational backgrounds;
 - with a priority on lower socio-economic, at-risk children and their families; and
 - a focus on the cognitive, physical, health, and social and emotional well-being of each child.
2. FTF's Board in conjunction with the Regional Councils will continue to partner to:
 - equitably and effectively serve both urban and rural communities
 - collaborate with state agencies and tribal nations; and
 - foster public/private collaboration and collective impact.
3. FTF will continue to lead the early childhood system, with a focus to:
 - leverage its subject matter expertise across the state
 - convene and align stakeholder partners, and
 - position for sustainable equitable statewide future funding
4. FTF will foster a data-informed approach that:
 - continuously improves programs and strategies; and
 - actively promotes a more vibrant data sharing network amongst our partners.



MODEL EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEM – 6 DESIRED OUTCOMES

1. Access to high-quality, culturally responsive early care and education

2. Well-prepared, highly skilled and appropriately compensated professionals

3. Access to high-quality preventative and continuous health care

4. Information, services, and support for families

5. Public understanding and support

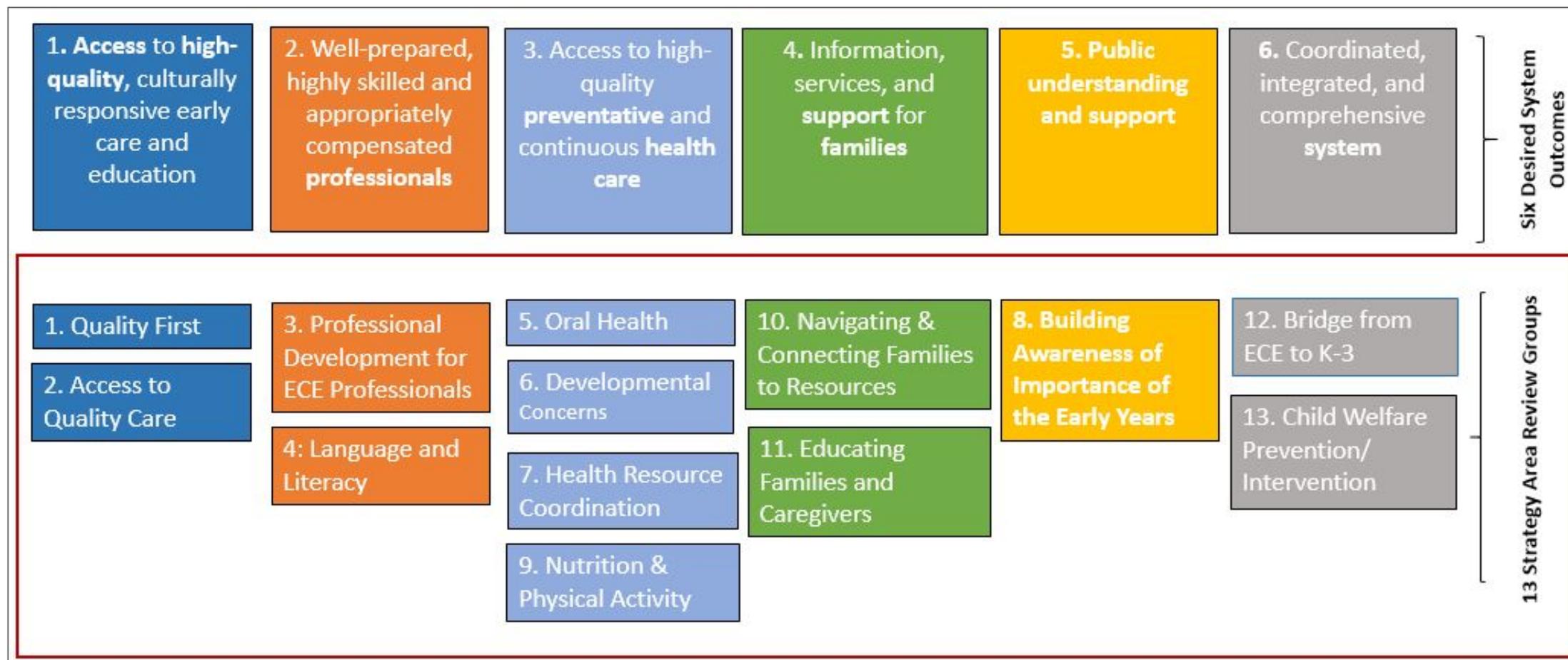
6. Coordinated, integrated, and comprehensive system

Six Desired System Outcomes



SWOT ANALYSIS OF 13 STRATEGY AREAS

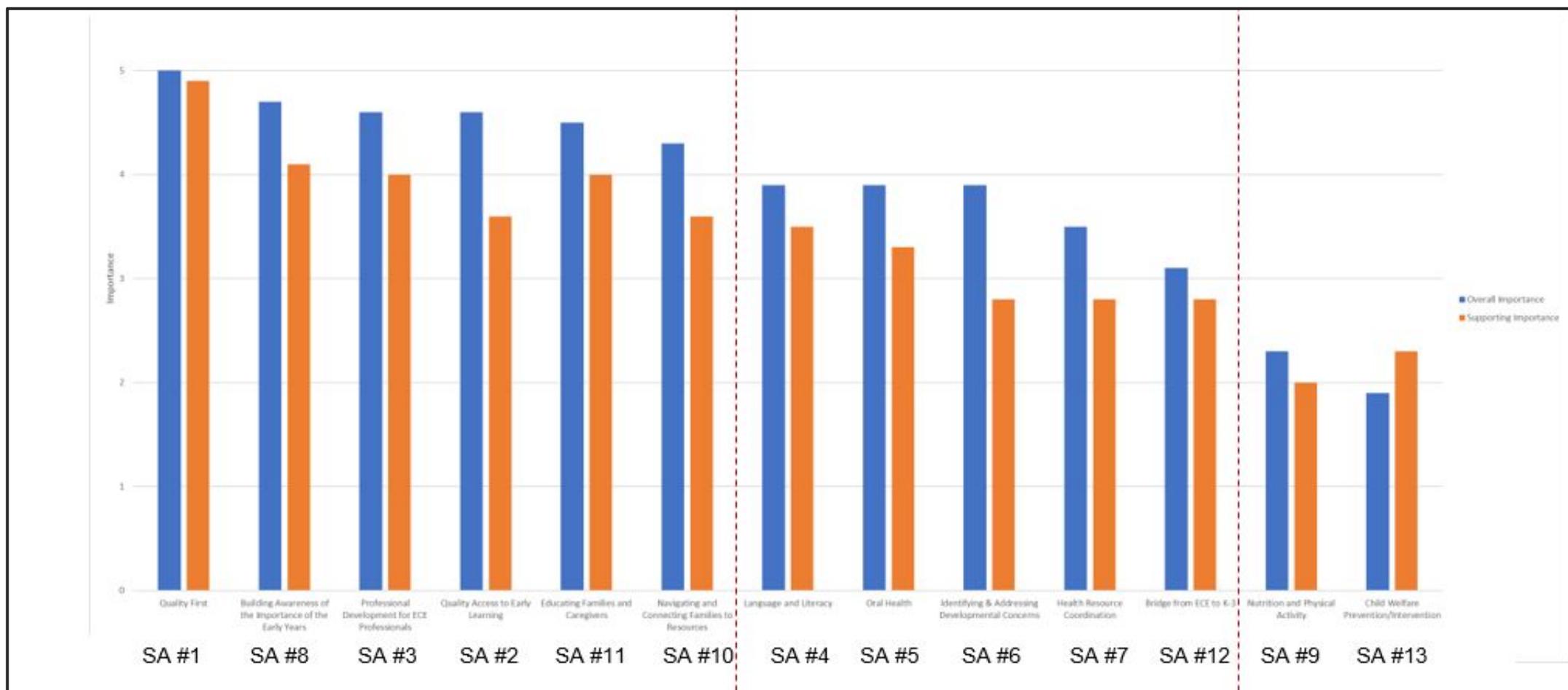
Strategy Area Review Groups align with the 6 desired outcomes of Arizona's early childhood system that were identified by the Early Childhood Task Force.





Prioritization was based on assessment of strategy area importance to FTF vision, mission, statutory objectives and priority system roles.

Supporting importance was based on FTF's role, other's roles and responsibilities and statewide pervasiveness.





6 Prioritized Strategy Areas:

- **Quality First**
- **Building Awareness of the Importance of the Early Years**
- **Professional Development for Early Childhood Education Professionals**
- **Access to Quality Early Learning**
- **Educating Families and Caregivers**
- **Navigating and Connecting Families to Resources**

DESIRED SYSTEM OUTCOMES

Access to high-quality, culturally responsive early care and education

Information, services and support for families

Well-prepared, highly skilled and appropriately compensated professionals

Public understanding and support

PRIORITIZED STRATEGY AREAS AND INCLUDED PROGRAMMATIC STRATEGIES

Quality First

- Quality First
- Quality First Program Assessment
- Quality First Coaching and Incentives
- QF Licensing Subsidy

Educating Families and Caregivers

- Home Visitation
- Parenting Education
- Family, Friend and Neighbor Care
- Language, Literacy & Culture in Tribal Communities
- Community Based Language and Literacy

Professional Development for ECE Professionals

- Registry and College Scholarships
- Professional Development of ECE Professionals
- Child Care Health Consultation
- Language, Communication & Literacy in Early Care and Education Settings

Building Awareness of the Importance of the Early Years

- Community Outreach
- Community Awareness

Access to Quality Care

- Quality First Scholarships
- Start-Up Expansion and Learning Lab

Navigating and Connecting Families to Resources

- Family Resource Centers
- Helpline
- Family Support Coordination
- Home Visitation Coordinated Referral System
- Service Coordination

- Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation
- Inclusion of Children with Special Needs
- Quality First Academy

- Media
- Parent Kit



Achieving Statewide Impact with Regional Flexibility:

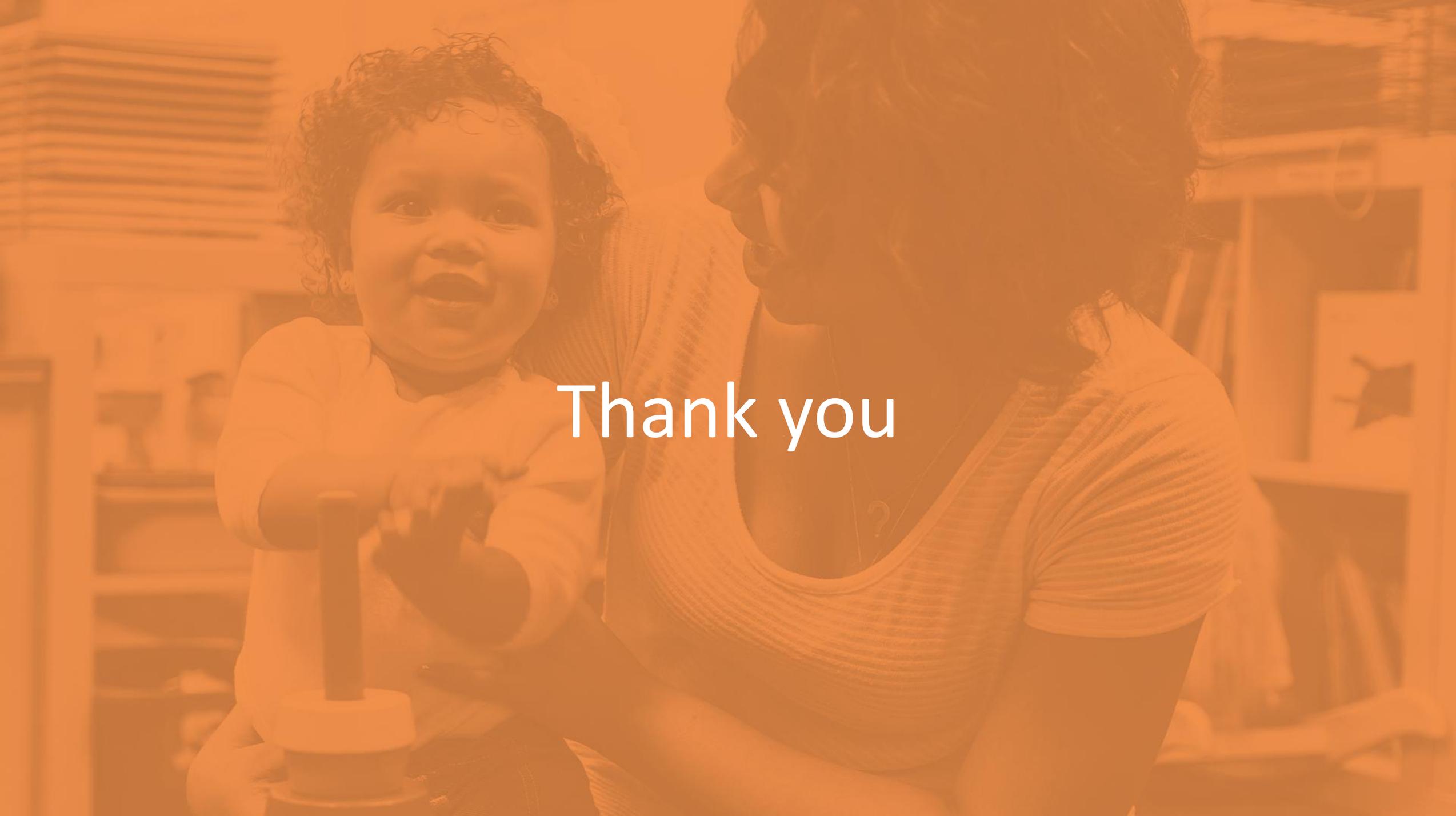
- Recommendation that each region allocate 80% of funding to 6 prioritized areas
- If no regional need exists, or, if lack of capacity prevents implementing services in these strategy areas, regional funding plans will include this rationale for funding below 80%
- If funding is below 80% for other reasons, regional plan will include rationale; if there are public system partners who hold primary responsibility in a different strategy area that region seeks to fund, the plans should explain how those partners will be engaged
- In recognition of FTF commitment to equity and prioritization of under-resourced and underserved children and families, regional funding plans shall include a description of how the plan promotes equity and support of these children and families



SFY24-27 Strategic Plan

Unknowns: Rapidly changing external context



A photograph of a woman with dark curly hair holding a young child with curly hair. The child is holding a white toy with a vertical rod. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent orange filter. The text "Thank you" is centered in white.

Thank you