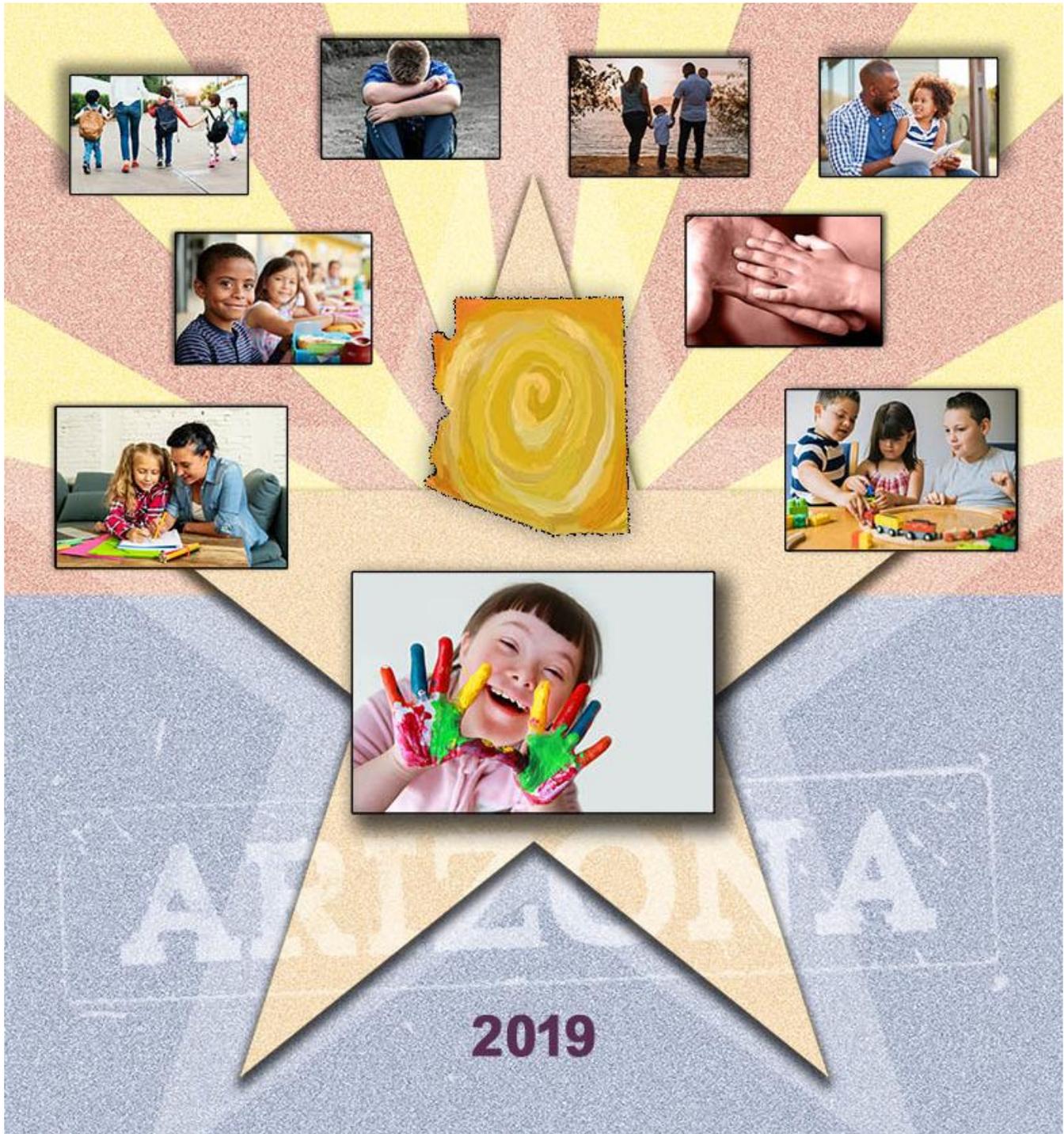


“Strong Families Thriving Children”

Prescott Community Town Hall Report

Prescott, AZ – September 6, 2019



STRONG FAMILIES THRIVING CHILDREN

**Prescott Community Town Hall Report
Friday, September 6, 2019 – Prescott, AZ**

Participants of the September 2019 Prescott Community Town Hall make the following findings and recommendations. This report reflects the consensus achieved through group discussions by Community Town Hall participants.

CHARACTERISTICS OF STRONG FAMILIES AND THRIVING CHILDREN

Strong families and thriving children need to have a foundation of support including connections with neighbors, the community, institutions such as Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), and other trusted resources, who serve to engage them and expand the eyes and ears that see and hear them. Physical needs are critical, including housing, safety, employment, and healthy food along with caring social and emotional supports. Children need to be their parent's top priority and given the time, affection and loving relationships that enable them to thrive. They also need their parents to provide consistency and serve as role models. Parent education is also critical, integrated with support from the schools.

GREATEST OPPORTUNITIES FOR STRENGTHENING ARIZONA FAMILIES AND CHILDREN

We need to bridge the silos and foster collaboration among support programs that provide family outreach, drug education and treatment, including the Department of Economic Security (DES), law enforcement, Kids at Hope, Arizona Children's Association, First Things First and other support programs. We need to encourage volunteers including seniors and students to work in these programs. It is critically important to provide needed funding for public education, especially for pre-K to 12. We need to fund counselors and training programs including mental health first aid. Programs such as the Imagination Library, food distribution and backpacks are especially helpful. Universal pre-school would go a long way to strengthen and prepare children and families for kindergarten. We need to ensure that all children have access to healthy food, housing, safety and have their physical needs met. It is important to remove the stigma associated with asking for help that can delay needed support. We need to be inclusive and change our language to be strength-based and positive. "At Risk" language and thinking should be changed to "At Potential." We need to encourage WIC and Head Start program awareness. Early and effective intervention is needed so that our first responders and teachers can recognize people with needs including children dealing with Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).

WHAT I WOULD TELL ARIZONA'S ELECTED LEADERS

- Expand the thinking process and prioritize legislative actions accordingly, including providing the full funding Arizona needs for public education and other programs that support families.
- Consistently invest in children and families and recognize that strengthening families and children transcends partisanship, and ensure that their votes reflect those values.
- Become actively involved in the communities they represent and support family resource centers in all communities such as Del Webb.
- Make it mandatory for all elected officials to visit public schools to educate themselves on the impact of their decisions.
- Understand that supporting Arizona families and children through funding and other critical resources saves money and fosters prosperity over the long term.

INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS

Recognizing that the power to change the future begins with each individual, participants committed to take personal actions based on their experience and discussions at the Prescott Community Town Hall. Below are individual actions that were shared.

I WILL...

- Share what I have learned in this discussion with my coworkers, colleagues, family and community network, and advocate (with elected officials) for increased funding for programs that strengthen families.
- Provide communication on resources available in the community.
- Use my resources to support local organizations that support family growth, youth growth and development-positive groups.
- Look for and, when possible, change language that stigmatizes access to the social services that support family and children's success.
- Continue educational advocacy in collaboration with families and our communities.
- Continue to collaborate with area organizations to provide opportunities for parent education at the library.
- Regularly call or email my elected officials to emphasize support for increased funding for birth-18 education.
- Reach out to local "grandparents raising grandchildren" groups to explore ways that my organization can support their families.
- Host a neighborhood block party to increase engagement and promote exchange of ideas in my own community.
- Organize a Future Leaders Town Hall on this topic.
- Help communities empower children, women and families to improve our society.
- Encourage others to volunteer.
- Share the discussions from today with co-workers, family and community members.
- Share the link to the strong families report.
- Stay engaged with topics that are important to me.
- Invest more of my time to volunteer to support organizations that support families and/or children's development.
- Provide communication of things available in the community.
- Take some of my free time to educate myself more about family dynamics. As well use what I have learned throughout my research and education to help educate at least one family in the next month.
- Share the report with our health improvement partners.
- Bring the Town Hall report to the legislature to ask them what they are going to do with the suggestions in the report.
- Get a better understanding of the needs in my community and stay involved in the conversations, and then take action to help make change in our culture.

- Get out in the community and find other organizations with a share mission and learn about what they do and who they serve so that I can educate others and, if feasible, collaborate or partner on programs or specific projects.
- Arrange to have Arizona Town Hall present at the next League of Cities and Towns Health Communities.
- Continue to stay involved in the issues our communities face along with taking action in having others become involved to support these challenges.
- Use my resources to support local organizations that support family growth, youth growth and development-positive groups.
- Support continued education, financial resources and services that provide/create resiliency in families to overcome ACES.
- Continue to network with other organizations that work toward strong families and thriving children.
- Discuss a social/emotional focus for recruiting volunteers to be with students.