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# EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

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Report of Findings and Analysis

*PRESENTED TO*



TUCSON REGIONAL  
**COMMUNITY VOICE**  
*realizing the possibilities*

April 2008



Marketing Intelligence  
*Marketing Research & Strategy Consultants*

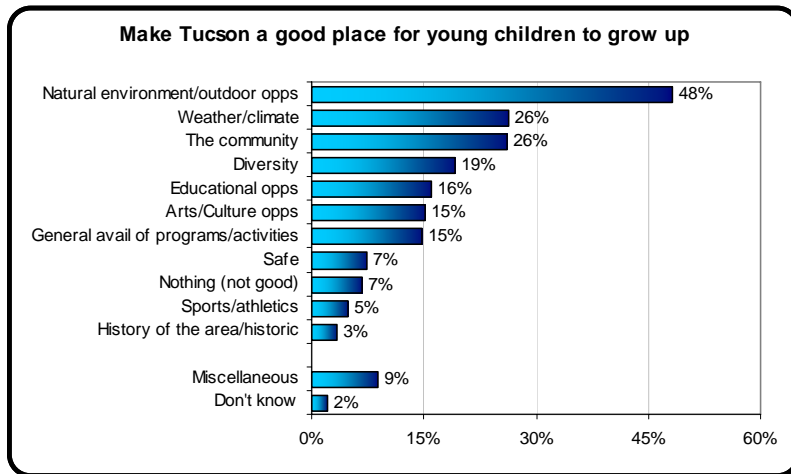
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## **I. SURVEY FINDINGS**

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The following survey findings are based on 351 responses to a web-based survey conducted by Marketing Intelligence, a Tucson, Arizona based marketing research and strategy consulting firm. The survey participants signed up to take a series of surveys involving the Tucson Region and thus should not necessarily be considered a random sample of area citizens. However, the respondents can be characterized as a sample of area citizens who are likely to be concerned about issues affecting the local community.

# Growing Up In Tucson



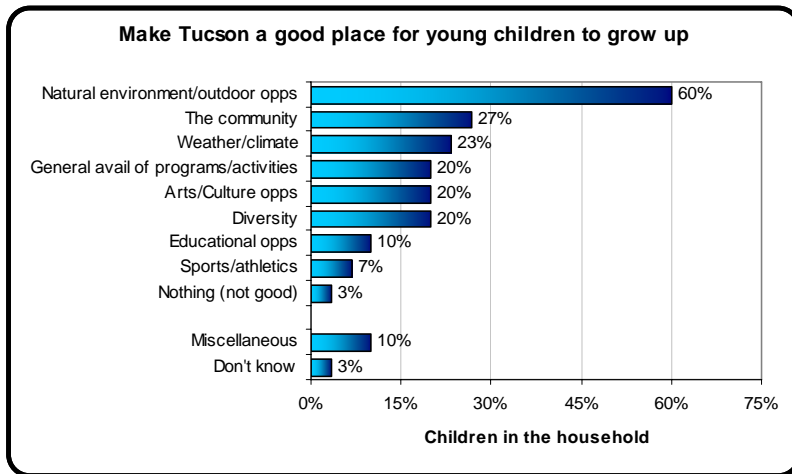
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In an open-ended question, respondents were asked what makes the greater Tucson area a good place for young children to grow up.

Nearly half cited the natural environmental and outdoor opportunities. Other common responses included the weather and climate, a sense of community in Tucson, issues related to diversity, educational opportunities, arts and cultural opportunities and other general program and activity-related opportunities.

The totals in the above graph do not add up to 100% because some respondents gave answers with multiple subject matters. For a complete list of all verbatim answers to this question, please see page 25.

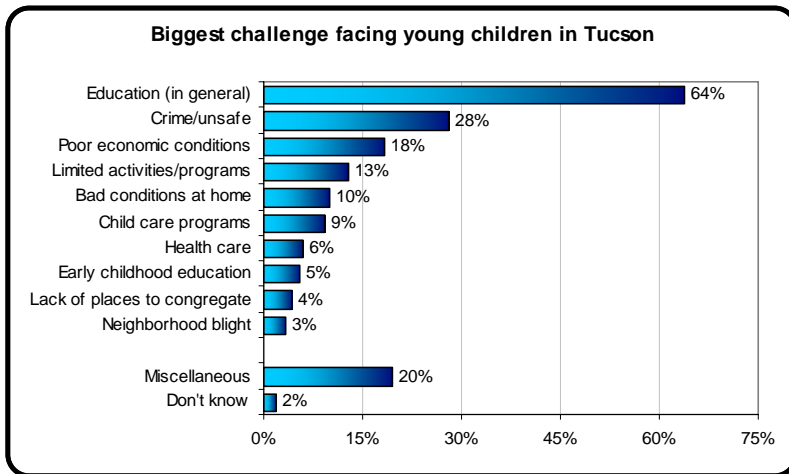
# Growing Up In Tucson



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For the same open-ended question, when considering only those with children in their household, the natural environment and outdoor opportunities are even more prevalent.

# Growing Up In Tucson



April 2008

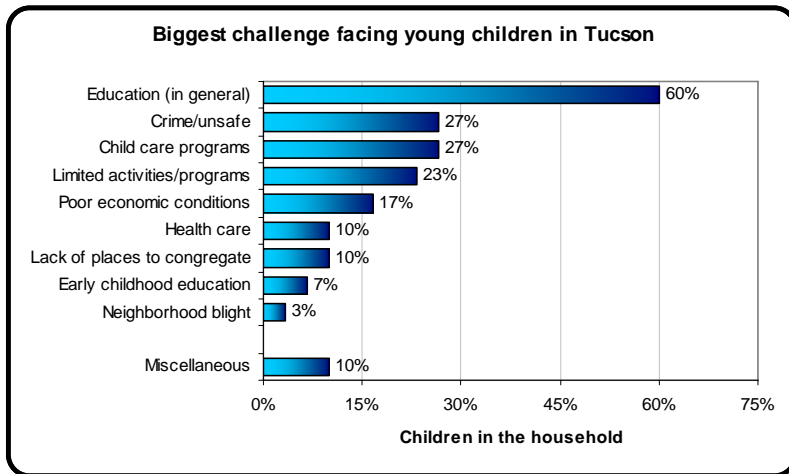
In a second open-ended question, respondents were asked what the biggest challenges facing young children in Tucson are.

Though 16% had mentioned “educational opportunities” as one of the things that makes Tucson a good place for children to grow up (in the previous question, nearly two-thirds feel that education is the biggest challenge facing young children in the area.

Crime and safety, poor economic conditions, limited youth-oriented activities and programs and a child’s home life were also mentioned by many.

The totals in the above graph do not add up to 100% because some respondents gave answers with multiple subject matters. For a complete list of all verbatim answers to this question, please see page 36.

# Growing Up In Tucson



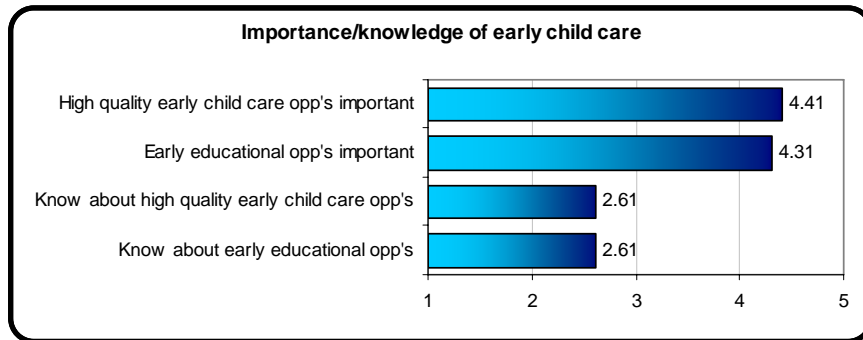
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Responses from those with children in the household are similar to the general population, with two exceptions:

A greater percentage of respondents with children in the household are more likely to feel that one of the biggest challenges facing children in the greater Tucson area are:

- Childcare programs (27% vs. 9% for the population as a whole)
- Limited youth-oriented activities and programs (23% vs. 13% for the population as a whole)

# Importance/Knowledge of Early Child Care

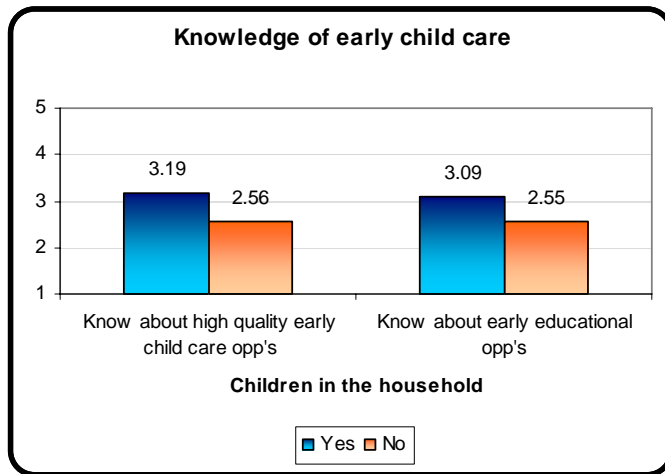


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Respondents were next asked to agree with a series of four statements (1 = completely disagree and 5 = completely agree) pertaining to the importance and their knowledge of high quality early child care and education.

While there is a recognition that it is important to have high quality early child care and education opportunities for all children five and younger, general lack of knowledge pertaining to both also exists.

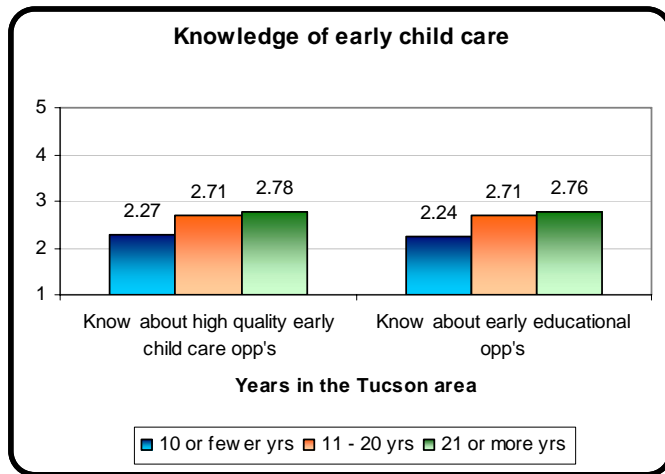
# Importance/Knowledge of Early Child Care



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High quality early child care and education are important regardless of whether or not there are children in the household. However, knowledge of the opportunities for each in the Tucson area is greater among those with children. Even within this group, knowledge is still not very high.

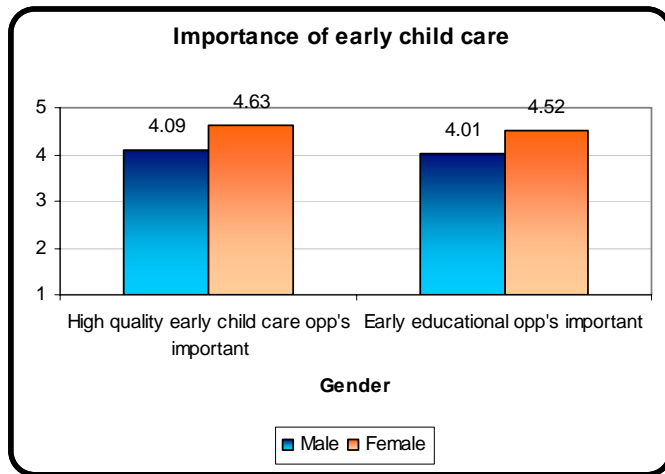
# Importance/Knowledge of Early Child Care



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Lack of knowledge pertaining to early child care and educational opportunities is lowest among those who have lived in the greater Tucson area for 10 or fewer years.

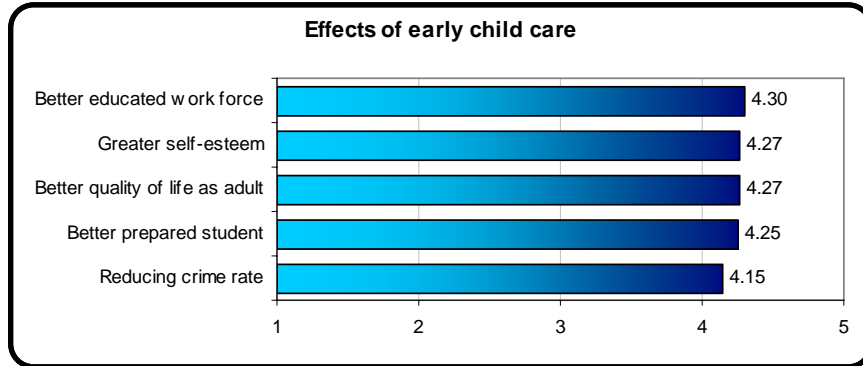
# Importance/Knowledge of Early Child Care



April 2008

While early child care and educational opportunities are important to all, they are both particularly important to Females (more so than with Males).

# Effects of Early Child Care

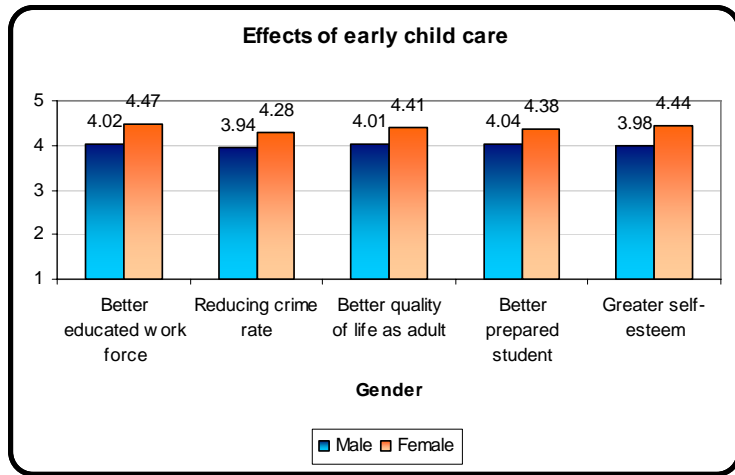


April 2008

Respondents were also asked to think about how early child care and education may shape the life of a child and that child's subsequent impact on society. They were asked to respond on a five-point scale where 1 = no impact at all and 5 = significant direct impact.

Most feel that there is an impact (with many feeling there is a direct impact) between early child care/education and providing the community with a better educated work force, creating greater self-esteem for a child throughout their life, creating a better quality of life for the child when they become an adult, having a better prepared student who wishes to continue education at the college/university level and reducing the crime rate within the community.

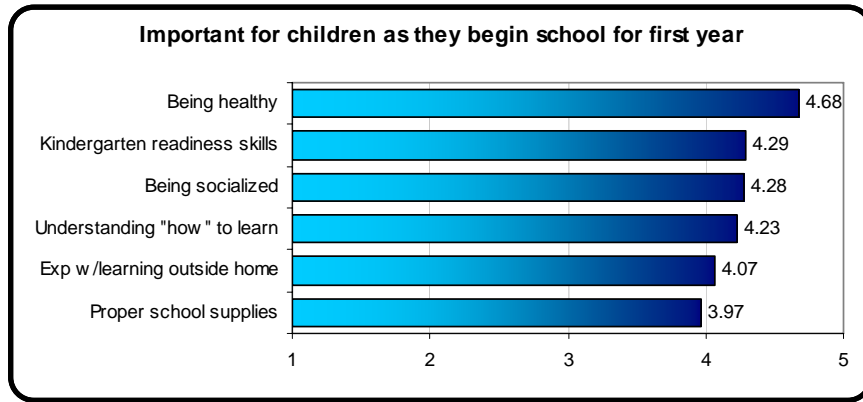
# Effects of Early Child Care



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Overall, Females are more likely to feel that early child care and education will have a greater impact on all five variables considered.

# Children Beginning School



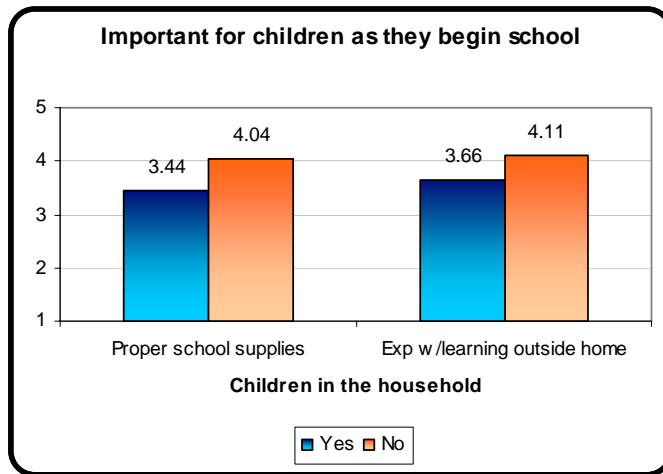
April 2008

Next, respondents were asked how important certain aspects are to having a child ready to begin school and learn for his or her first year on a five-point scale where 1 = not at all important and 5 = very important.

The most important factor is being healthy. The next group (in terms of importance) includes having kindergarten readiness skills, being socialized with other children of similar ages and understanding “how” to learn.

Considered not as important as the other factors (but still considered to be important) are having experiences with a learning setting outside of the home and having proper school supplies.

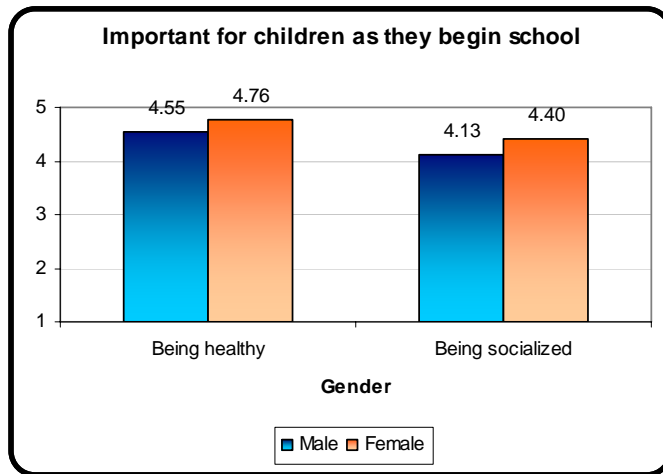
# Children Beginning School



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Those with children in the household are less likely to feel that having proper school supplies and having experiences with a learning setting outside of the home are important for a child as they begin school.

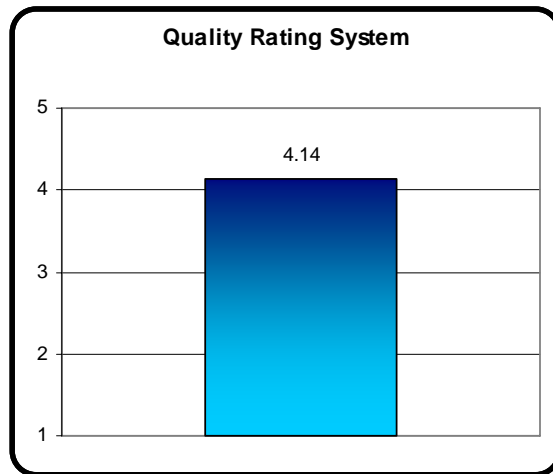
# Children Beginning School



April 2008

Females are more likely than Males to feel that being healthy and being socialized with other children of similar ages is important for children as the begin school.

# Child Care Rating System

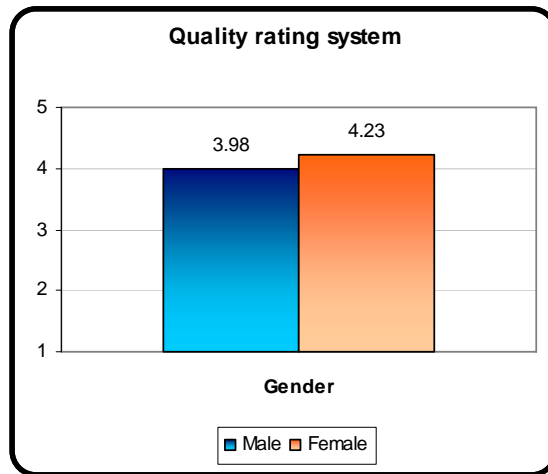


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The next section of the survey pertains to having a quality rating system that would offer evaluations of the different child care providers in the Tucson area.

When thinking of making the decision of which child care provider to choose (or thinking back to a time when they had to make a decision), most feel it would be beneficial (or would have been beneficial) to have a rating system (1 = not at all beneficial and 5 = very beneficial).

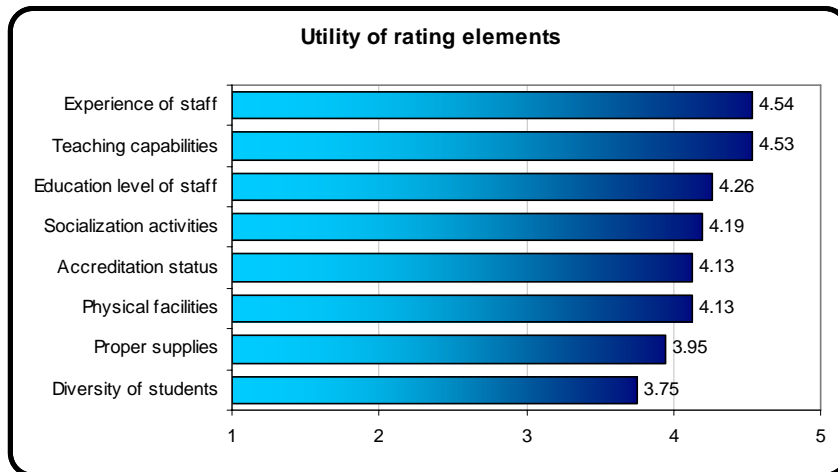
# Child Care Rating System



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Females are more likely than Males to feel that a quality rating system for evaluating the different child care providers would be beneficial.

# Child Care Rating System



April 2008

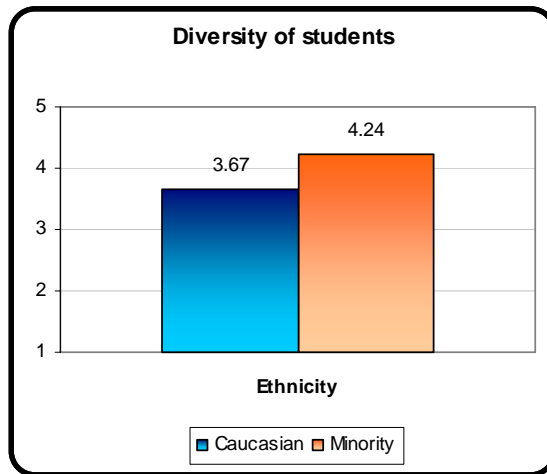
When considering the different elements that could be included in a quality rating system for child care providers, respondents were asked how useful eight separate components would be on a five-point scale where 1 = not at all useful and 5 = very useful.

The experience of the staff and teaching capabilities are considered to be the most useful in the aggregate.

The education level of the staff, socialization activities for children, accreditation status and the physical facilities comprise the second tier in terms of usefulness.

Also considered useful, though not as useful as the other eight elements, are having proper supplies and a diversity of students.

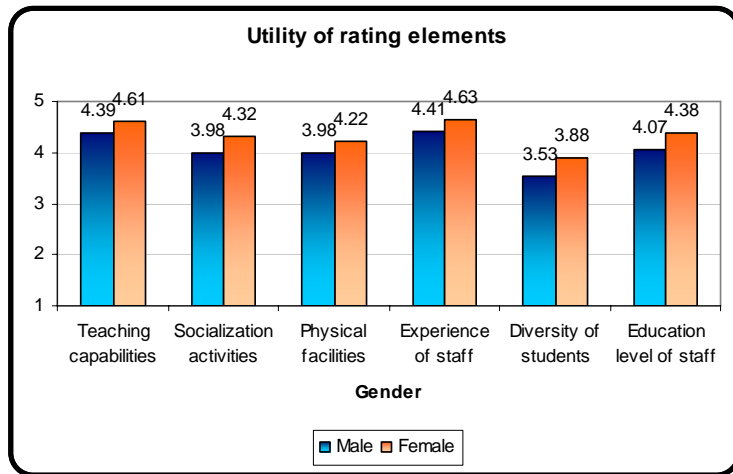
# Child Care Rating System



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Having a rating for the diversity of students is more important to minorities than it is for Caucasians.

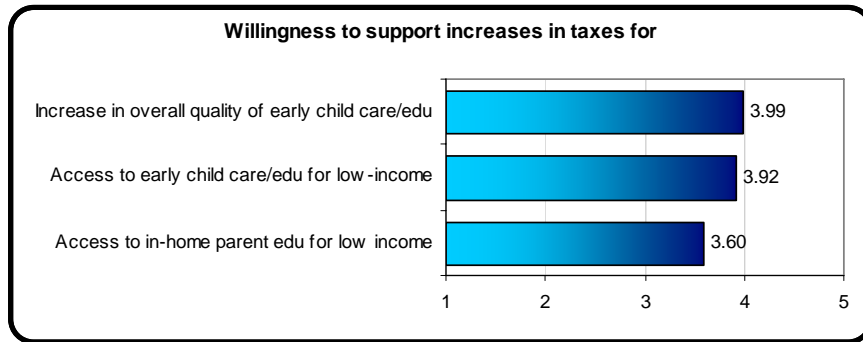
# Child Care Rating System



April 2008

Having teaching capabilities, socialization activities for children, the physical facilities, the experience of the staff, the diversity of students and the education level of the staff included in a rating system is more important to Females than it is to Males.

# Supporting Early Child Care



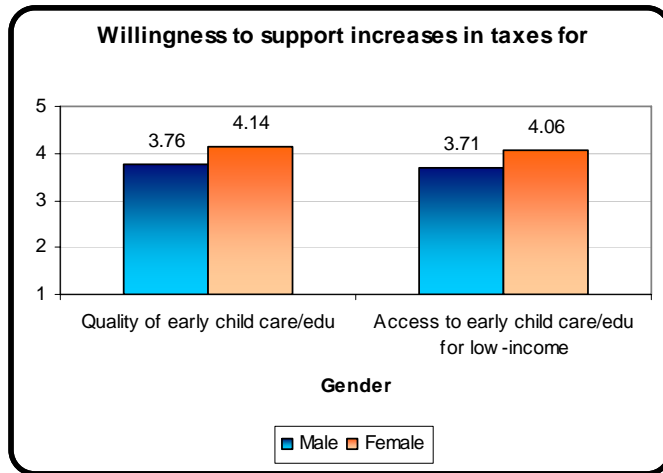
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For the final section, respondents were asked questions regarding support for early child care and education. To begin, they were asked how willing they would be to increase their taxes for each of three elements on a five-point scale, where 1 = not at all willing and 5 = very willing.

There is support for an increase in taxes to increase the overall quality of early child care and education programs and for creating greater access to early child care and education programs for children from low-income working families.

There is moderate support for an increase in taxes to increase access to in-home parent education programs for low-income families with young children.

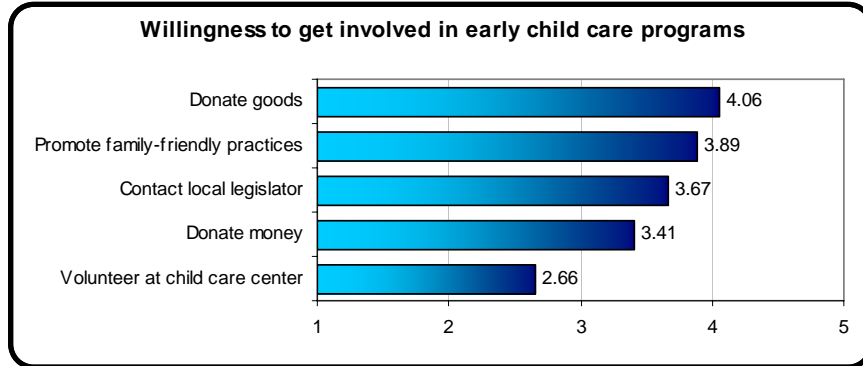
# Supporting Early Child Care



April 2008

Females are more likely than Males to support a tax increase to increase the overall quality of early child care and education programs and for creating greater access to early child care and education programs for children from low-income working families

# Supporting Early Child Care



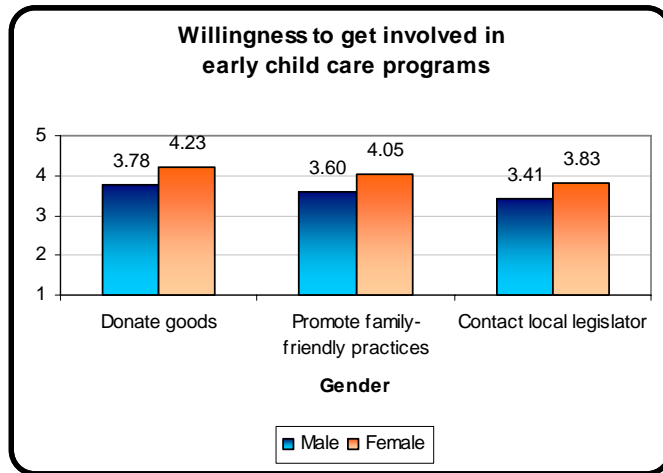
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Finally, respondents were asked how willing they are to get involved in early child care and education programs in five different ways on a five-point scale, where 1 = not at all willing and 5 = very willing.

There is a willingness to donate needed goods to an early child care and education program, promote family-friendly practices at their place of work and to call, write or e-mail their local legislator to advocate for early child care and education programs.

There is moderate willingness to donate money to an early child care and education program, but less willingness to volunteer at a local child care center.

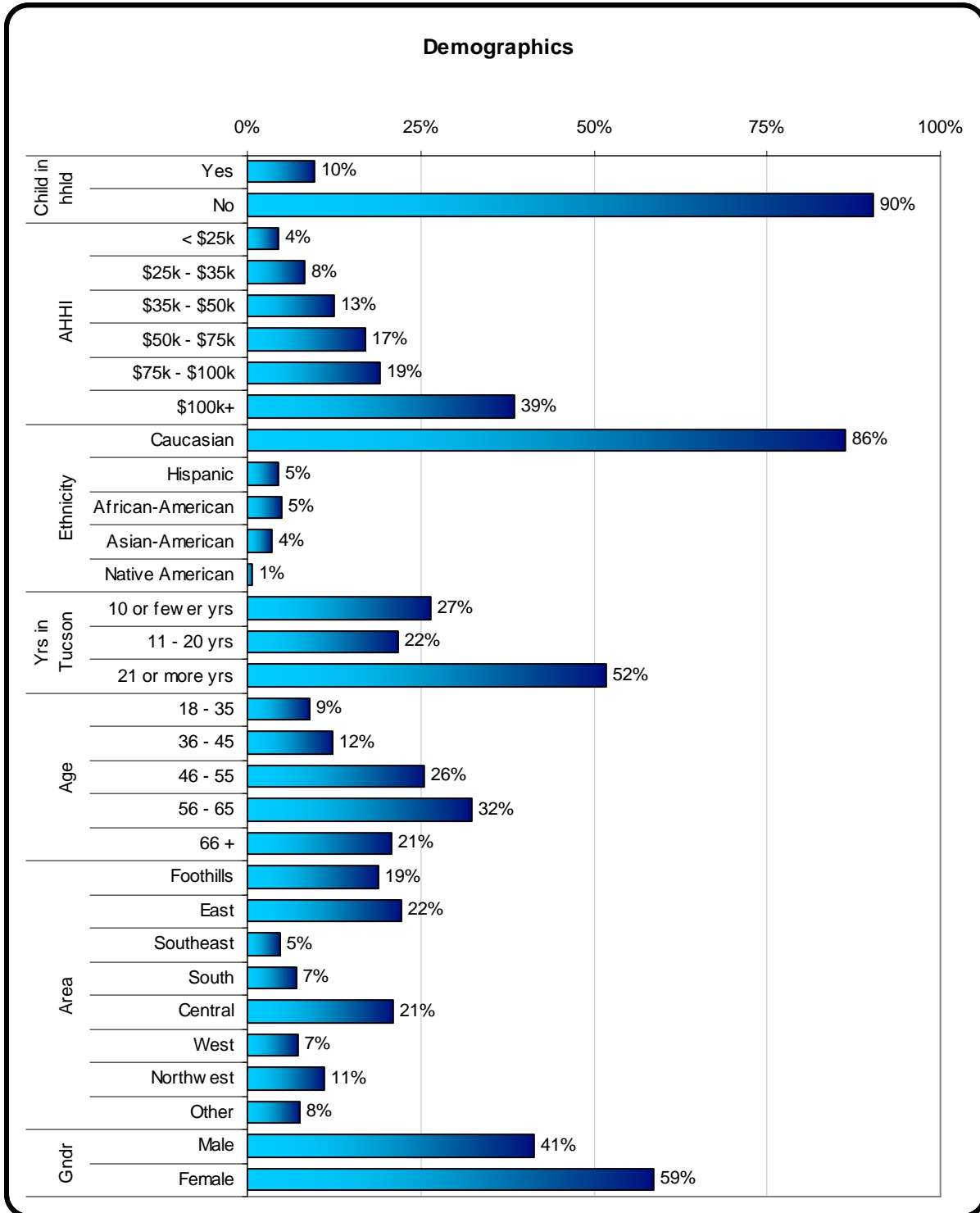
# Supporting Early Child Care



April 2008

Females are more likely than Males to be willing to donate needed goods to an early child care and education program, promote family-friendly practices at their place of work and to call, write or e-mail their local legislator to advocate for early child care and education programs.

## II. SURVEY RESPONDENTS



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## OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES

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**\*\*\* Please note: The responses are exactly as the respondent typed them in. There may be typos or grammatical errors on their part \*\*\***

**Question 1 – In your opinion, what makes the greater Tucson area a good place for young children to grow up?**

- \* Great weather \* Beautiful outdoor venues \* "Small Town" feel
- ?????
- A big network of support between the different programs in the area.
- A caring community
- A chance to grow up in a multicultural community with a deep history and sense of place; a chance to grow up in an amazing environmental setting
- A community that essentially cares for its children, that we have a wealth of community programs and activities that are geared for children, and are especially targeted at low income and at-risk youth.
- A great university, a great library system, wonderful outdoor recreation opportunities, and thriving arts and cultural organizations - all terrific resources for parents and child caregivers
- A nice sized community with cultural, recreational, outdoors, and fun activities. Warm climate
- A safe environment for raising children
- A sense of a small town community
- A sense of community, for the most part
- A variety of natural resources and cultural exploration awaits those children lucky enough to be shown what Tucson is all about.
- A vast variety of cultures to learn from and be part of. Good research areas such as the U o far, many library locations. many attractions that deal with children and adults both
- Ability to grow up close to nature, lower violent crime rate, access to learning Spanish-- this will be an advantage in the future as much as we try to eliminate it from native speaking children.
- Abundance of nature, good weather,
- Access to mountains, hiking trails, unenclosed areas, and historic places and information.
- Access to National Forests and National Parks. The Desert Museum. Lovely weather. Generally clean air.
- Access to the outdoors; rich cultural stew.
- An excellent variety of cultures
- An infrastructure that offers young children and their families an incredibly rich system of support.
- An involved community, generally willing to accept the demands of nurturing youngsters.
- As a mentor (my own kids grew up in Rhode Island as did I) I'd say adequate neighborhood parks for young children to play safely in. Every kid I've worked with (I've had ten) has had a nearby park available.
- As a single person with no children I really don't consider myself an expert. However, I feel we are making strides in improving education and creating recreation for today's

children, i.e. skate parks, rec centers, etc. Yes, I think it is a good place for young children to grow up.

- As far as being born and raised in Tucson - if you are rich; you can afford to go to basketball camp at the U of A or on a vacation. As far as greater Tucson? I believe living in a community where most of the neighbors have been the same neighbors for over 50 years is in itself a valuable resource. I believe living in Tucson - where my Father, Mother and Sisters were born and raised; where my Uncles, Aunts, Cousins and all my family and friends are from is and has been an excellent environment for any child to be raised in. My Mexican American and American Indian culture and history is all around me - whether in the architecture of San Xavier or the original Barrios and streets of Tucson; this connection to my roots has provided me the connection and respect with my community and culture. Naturally, as a part of Tucson's original indigenous communities - this connection provides a child with a sense of belonging and is a good place for a child to grow up in.
- Availability of parks, community activities, and a strong school system.
- Availability of year 'round outdoor activity.
- Beautiful weather, lots of outdoor things to participate in, Casual surroundings, Good entertainment
- Being able to be outdoors all the time and the multicultural fabric of Tucson
- Bike-able, easy access to desert/outdoors, hikes/nature, Himmel Park (ok, many of the public parks), arts community and related classes/events/support, active healthy-environmental-peace loving community.
- Can bike anywhere in midtown, which is where all the useful stuff (parks, libraries, non-big- box shops) is.
- Caring community, ability to enhance offerings and address challenges fairly easily due to parental involvement and responsive officials.
- Clean air
- Clean air and a decent natural environment. Also, a vibrant, diverse community.
- Clean air, can play outside year round, well-supported parochial schools, many community activities
- Clean air, open space, hometown feel, lots of cultural experiences
- Clean air, open space, many community organizations
- Clean air. Bi-cultural, historical community.
- Clean air; most sunny days in the U.S. for enjoying the outdoors; friendly, watchful neighborhoods.
- Clean environment, safe place, options for entertainment and activities, good schools
- Clean, ample parks spread over the city/county. Open spaces for hiking, picnicking. recreation facilities with pools etc. sports programs, dance and arts.
- Climate (access to the outdoors), sense of independence.
- Climate allows schools the use of the outdoors for much of the school year. Relatively safe environment. A city of this size allows for a diversity of events, places to visit and things to do for a reasonable amount of money. Close proximity to a large city (Phoenix, even LA/San Diego) and all that offers.
- Climate and environment
- Climate and outdoor activities
- Climate encourages bicycle and other outdoor activity.
- Climate makes it easy to be active outdoors
- Climate, access to nature
- Climate, Access to wild open spaces and access to a diverse culture.

- Climate, activities, outdoors, culture and history of Tucson
- Climate, bilingual and diverse culture, ability to learn about the wonders of nature
- Climate, open spaces scenery, range of education resources
- Close knit communities
- Community relatively free of racial tension and similar social ills. Major university and strong community college feeders.
- Cultural diversity, and given the sorry state of funding for childhood programs from our legislature that's about it.
- Cultural diversity, easy access to outdoors most of the year and having a large academic center
- Cultural diversity, laid back culture, University
- Cultural diversity, outdoor environment
- Cultural diversity, parks, children's museum, beautiful weather for outdoor activities
- Cultural opportunities, outdoor opportunities, supportive community of families
- Desert surroundings -- beautiful environment, able to be outside much of the year
- Diverse population, the great outdoors, and lot's of cultural venues appropriate for children.
- Diverse community and opportunity to participate in a variety of culturally rich activities
- Diverse culture
- Diverse cultures, great outdoors
- Diverse population and the mountains and desert
- Diversity
- Diversity and outdoor activities
- Diversity of cultures
- Diversity, culture and lots of sunshine.
- Diversity, outdoor activities, history and possibilities for the future.
- Diversity, weather, proximity to natural wonders.
- Diversity. Affordability.
- Don't have kids, I wouldn't know
- Don't know
- Encourage Strong Families, Safe place
- Environment Cultural diversity
- Excellent natural environment, friendly people, multicultural access, strong literary community
- Excellent public school systems exist although there is a great need to improve their funding.
- Exposure to different cultures and races
- Exposure to diverse cultures and history, and proximity to great natural resources.
- Fairly safe with a variety of people and great outdoor opportunities
- Family
- Family activities
- Family friendly, easy to get around, relaxed lifestyle
- Family networks when there are extended families locally.
- Family oriented communities and good school districts that offer pre school opportunities
- Fantastic outdoor opportunities to grow and appreciate the Sonoran Desert, a good place to learn about and participate in the arts of all genres, and cultural diversity and acceptance.
- Feelings of "community"

- For families that are in the middle class, the neighborhoods and public schools are good. Tucson has a good community feel.
- For the most part Tucson is a safe, friendly community. Parks, the zoo, libraries, there can be a lot of resources for those who know about them.
- Fresh air
- Fresh air, plenty of neighborhood parks, generally caring populace.
- Friendly community
- Friendly, clean, beautiful
- Funding public education
- Generally safe. Out doors activities are wide spread.
- Geographic location; state, local, and private parks; big city amenities with small town feel
- Good air, safe,(if you not into drugs) good weather.
- Good neighborhood structure, wide variety of cultural events.
- Good quality nature programs at the various parks - e.g. Tohono Chul, Desert Museum, etc. Also there are good sports leagues - e.g. AYSO soccer - where the attitude is healthy competition.
- Good schools with strong academic programs, music, athletic and other exciting extracurricular activities that they can get involved with that relate to our part of the country.
- Good weather for outside activities, Plenty for families to do together, good cultural, historical and musical opportunities for families
- Good weather friendly community and easy access to public lands.
- Good weather,
- Good weather, less/no snow days.
- Good weather. Access to State Land.
- Great climate, great people, outdoor living
- Great climate, some good cultural experiences, arts and music experiences are good.
- Great diversity and outdoor beauty
- Great natural setting that encourages curiosity; cultural opportunities such as the Children's Museum and Zoo; lots of recreational opportunities such as soccer and softball/baseball youth teams.
- Great outdoor environment promotes physical activity
- Great outdoors and wildlife
- Great weather
- Great weather - not too much street crime.
- Great weather and variety of activities
- Great weather for outdoor activities, good selection of options for art, music, sports and science to explore. Not everywhere but many places are tolerant of children and include or plan for them in activities e.g. festivals.
- Great weather to place outside in year round
- Greater sense of community.
- History, culture, nature
- Hmm... Can't think of any off hand...
- I believe that the average native Tucsonan and those who have chosen to live in the Tucson area tend to be more family oriented than in many other communities. A predisposition toward family values and striving to achieve a balance between work and play.

- I do not know if I would agree that Tucson is a great place to grow up. I think that we are so lacking in services for young children that it would be difficult to raise a child here.
- I do not think that Tucson is a good place for young children to grow up.
- I don't think that this is a good place for young children to grow up. Crime, education, poverty, recreation, public transportation, substance abuse and unemployment are problems that are not being addressed adequately.
- I don't have much of an opinion here, as I do not have children, and do not plan on having children. From an observational point of view, I do not think the greater Tucson area is a very good place for young children to grow up.
- I don't really think it is a good place to raise children but since it is a larger town, maybe the fact there is a lot to do.
- I don't see it as being any better or worse than many other areas of the country.
- I don't think it is necessarily better than other places
- I don't think the greater Tucson area is a good place for young children to grow up. There is a lot of crime in this area. More than cities of similar size. More importantly, the education system in the state of AZ is lacking compared with that in other states.
- I grew up here, good weather, lots of diverse cultures, lots of activities available, good schools.
- I grew up in Tucson, kids didn't have to be afraid of just being out and having fun. No place for kids is a good place anymore.
- I have no idea - I do not have kids, I did not go to school here and I do not know what resources exist for young children.
- I love the small town feel. There seems to be a feeling of community not found in bigger cities.
- I think the emphasis on preserving the history of this area is fortunate.
- I think the Tucson area has some great things for young children such as sports, focus on sciences, learning about the desert, conservation efforts, environmental issues.
- I think Tucson needs help in this area
- I'm no longer sure it is since we are nearly the murder capital of the U.S.
- I'm not sure there is a good reason.
- In a safe loving home setting where both parents are present and devoted to healthy family development.
- interesting culture outdoor venues for play
- It has a small town feeling.
- It is a special place to grow up in because of the people that choose to live here. The community cares a great deal and the amount of eager volunteers is quite extraordinary.
- It is not a good place for young children to grow up, it's dangerous and the education is pathetic
- It is still small enough that children can interact with their neighborhood.
- It's bicycle friendly
- It's casual and friendly with a beautiful natural environment.
- It's hard to find much good when less than 1 child in 10 is capable of doing college level work after they leave high school. Teachers seem sincerely committed and concerned for their students.
- It's multicultural environment. Also, the weather.
- It's not a good place to grow up.
- Keeping its heritage, its older buildings, its race tracks, its spring training, the university, its memories and visual images available to share between generations. It's being despoiled by the visual cancers we call Walgreen's and that mentality that allows them

to be built, and by outsiders who call themselves planners but are using Tucson to get better jobs in California.

- Lack of racism Some excellent offerings in the community to support families.
- Learning about the Sonoran Desert and seeing some farming operations.
- Livable neighborhoods with the opportunity for quality education. This a task for the whole community.
- Living in Tucson with our great weather and 'wide open spaces' makes it easier to be outside, play sports, explore, hike and be more physical.
- Lots of activities available and teachers who really care.
- Lots of child friendly activities
- Lots of open space. Diverse cultures, however none should be allowed to overshadow the American culture.
- Lots of opportunities for arts, sciences, parks & recreation, individual and team sports.
- Lots of outdoor activities, the library system is wonderful, as are the parks.
- Lots of outdoor activities. Suburbs offer a safe wholesome environment for children to mature.
- Lots of outdoor activities; low cost swimming lessons; friendly community
- Lots of outdoor activity, university town, slower pace lifestyle, multi-cultural community.....
- Lots of parks
- Lots of parks, open spaces, ability to connect with nature
- Lots of places to go, good weather for being outside
- Lots of traffic, and pedestrian unfriendly
- Lots of variety of things to do and good weather to do them in.
- Low cost of living for families, affordable home ownership
- Low key lifestyle, outdoor activities, parents can be more involved
- Many agencies and leaders are committed to working in collaboration with each other. We have a common vision for bettering the lives of the kids in our city. There are a lot of problems and it will take many people working together to overcome them.
- Many cultural activities: zoo, symphony programs, museums, many parks, open spaces and skies, Mt. Lemmon close by, Presidio reenactments downtown also many multicultural activities: seeing and being around a mixture of skin colors, languages, cultural heritages, Mariachi Conference, Tucson Meet Yourself, various Native American, Hispanic American activities
- Many people are beginning to see the importance of the early years and business and community leaders are beginning to galvanize around issues.
- Mild weather, cleaner air, smaller population
- More family-centered activities such as school sports or club groups; fewer commercial attractions that separate families
- Much creativity in the community, strong programs in the arts, an emerging system in support of literacy
- Multi-cultural environment, excellent weather, great opportunities for outdoor activities.
- Natural beauty, good weather, adequate schools, variety of activities i.e. sports, museums, music/drama
- Natural areas close to the city, such as Tucson Mountain Park and Sabino Canyon. After school and summer programs. City and County Parks + great weather for out of doors activity.
- Natural surroundings and friendly people
- Natural, open spaces great climate

- Nice people and good services
- No opinion
- No, there are not enough good quality programs, schools and activities for children.
- Not much
- Not much
- Not much anymore
- Not much.
- Not much. Easily-accessible parks and hiking trails?
- Not really an urban environment. Children can grow up in nice neighborhoods and have a wide variety of things to see and do.
- Not sure.
- Not too big, not too small. The benefits of a metropolitan area with a great mix of cultural offerings, as well as outdoor activity - room to breathe.
- Nothing in particular
- Nothing really comes to mind. We are almost dead last among the states in funding, TUSD is bound in bureaucracy, so not much gets done.
- One heavy advantage that Tucson has is air quality. Growing up in Los Angeles as a kid during the 70s, I can attest to this. Additionally, I'm sure the diverse culture in southern Arizona helps broaden the horizons of children in this area more than I suppose kids in the mid-west whose only exposure to Hispanic culture are the immigrant workers whereas in Tucson, we're more privy to the true Hispanic culture that has helped to shape this region.
- Open space and moderate weather
- Open space, good weather - kids have innumerable options for exploring the outdoors; if they are not confined indoors by family circumstances or addiction to TV
- Open spaces, many rural neighborhoods
- Opportunities to grow up around natural settings
- Opportunities available that might not be available in a larger community.
- Opportunities for experiencing diverse cultures. Opportunities for exposure to many of the creative arts. Opportunities for exposure to the Sonoran Desert ecology.
- Opportunities for outdoor play, some neighborhood communities.
- Opportunities to experience a range of different natural environments.
- Opportunity to explore and learn outdoors almost year round; caring, dedicated people working to change conditions for all children; community interest in supporting young children
- Opportunities for outdoor recreation.
- Other than nice people, I can't think of anything that makes it special for children. It's definitely not the schools
- Other than the weather, I'm not sure. Mostly, because I don't have children.
- Our diversity and small town feel.
- Outdoor activities, public programs like libraries and parks and rec classes
- Outdoor activities. School programs. City of Tucson parks and rec programs. Educational opportunities at the U of A.
- Outdoor activities/lifestyle
- Outdoor recreation. Regional proximity to major cities, natural wonders, varying climates (Desert, Mountains, Beach, Forest), etc.
- Overall, I believe Tucson is a great place to raise children. However, the crime rate is too high, and the education is not up to par how it should be.

- Parents are the #1 important factor. Tucson has a wonderful zoo, Children's museum, the Arizona-Sonoran Desert Museum to learn lots about the environment they live in, as well as a public library system that offers programs for various ages, and the choice of public, private, or charter schools.
- Parks and Rec Services, good schools
- Parks and schools integrated within the neighborhoods
- Parks, other recreational activities, lots of daycare and preschool options.
- Plenty of good public swimming pools. Decent parks, though maintenance is poor. Decent bike paths for family rides. Good public land nearby for camping.
- Practically nothing.
- Provisions for safe play, education and appropriate entertainment facilities.
- Proximity to the desert.
- Public schools and recreational facilities.
- Recreation, outdoor activities, community parks.
- Relatively good schools, wide neighborhood streets, parks, a quality police and fire department.
- Relatively low crime rate
- Relatively peaceful, multi-cultural environment for families.
- Relatively safe, lower population density than a big urban area
- Resources, activities, affordable child care, medical care and nature.
- Rich cultural heritage, feels like a smaller town, friendliness, openness of community
- Sadly, very little
- Safe neighborhoods, plenty of activities - cultural, sports, recreational; and pretty decent air quality.
- Safety, activities, good role model from community, jobs for them to grow into
- Safety, on the North side, good schools on the North side, outdoor activities available year round,
- Schools that challenge children's minds and expand their curiosity. Schools that pay attention to the social and emotional needs of children. More recess. Healthy food. Interdependence over competition. More classroom time to nurture deeper interests literature, math and science. Stop the emphasis on testing for teacher and school funding! More community art, music, and math programs and parks!
- Sense of community that is dedicated to family and imported Midwest family values.
- Sense of community, lots of activities available, great weather
- Size of city
- Small town atmosphere
- Small town atmosphere in a large city
- Small town feel - access to natural areas access to various arts
- Small town, healthy environment
- Strong communities, good weather
- Strong community support for high-quality early childhood programs
- Sunshine, fresh air, good weather year round.
- The ability to play outdoors and the variety of cultures. There is also a supportive community.
- The alternative educational possibilities providing choices for parents. The accessibility to the outdoors.
- The beautiful desert with all the opportunities to get to know and love nature and the environment. Also, the University which brings so many cultural opportunities for the kids - theater, arts, music, dance, photography, etc. It's marvelous really.

- The beautiful desert, the mix of cultures and the arts and the fine private schools.
- The beautiful surroundings, the diversity of our community, the richness of cultures and history.
- The bilingual and bicultural opportunities
- The blend between a rural town and the big city that has the potential to bring the best of both worlds.
- The care and the passion of the people involved in early childhood who have a lot of ideas on how to make things better for the children and families in this area.
- The climate
- The climate and surrounding nature
- The climate and the open spaces
- The combination of opportunities available in a city of significant size such as museums, libraries, etc. and the ease of access to natural areas such as Saguaro National Park, etc. Also, the availability of good health care and in-depth expertise supported by the UA Medical School and UMC.
- The community provides interesting things for Young children to do - Family day, Children's museum, Voices Community stories past & present
- The desert
- THE desert. I roamed in the desert as a child and I loved it. Never had a problem with prickles or biteys....Sad thing today is that we have not decreed that all developments keep 5-10% open space.
- The diversity and size of city.
- The diversity in cultures. The slow pace of life.
- The diversity of people in this area. Good population of people so that we have more opportunities.
- The diversity of the community & the access to educational & cultural activities
- The diversity of the population, not too crowded, opportunity to attend a college campus and opportunity to attend varied cultural events.
- The ease of getting out into natural areas with such diversity. Mountains with trees and snow, streams like Sabino, rocky barren areas, grassy valleys and the huge diversity of desert plants and animals, if you know where to look.
- The education system and other private organizations available that helps make the children excited and open to information.
- The fact that it is not a big metropolitan city.
- The growing commitment to quality early education lead by United Way and the First Things First imitative
- The highly qualified school teachers who are dedicated even with the low pay.
- The natural environment and the good weather provides a variety of wonders to explore and to learn from.
- The northwest part of Tucson is
- The open desert that is still undisturbed and accessible for hiking, walking, birding and wildlife viewing
- The opportunities to take part in many outdoor activities all year round.
- The outdoor lifestyle.
- The parks and the mountain ranges around the valley, with trails and riparian areas
- The people who live here.
- The quality and climate of early childhood opportunities for the well-heeled.
- The ready availability of nature, arts and cultural experiences at reasonable costs or free. Community values that include a commitment to children's needs and issues.

- The relative safety of the City, the focus on improving early childhood education, the number of organizations focused on improving the quality of teachers and environments for early childhood education
- The small-town feel.
- The Sonoran desert -- if it isn't all bladed before too long. Actually, Tucson Mountain Park is a godsend. I quietly thank whoever had the foresight to have that land set aside for protection.
- The support services for parents and children
- The Tucson community is still a "small town" place -- friendly; and that, I believe, contributes to a positive environment for children.
- The unique desert area with our beautiful mountains and our cultural diversity. Tucson is still small enough to have retained some small town characteristics.
- The variety of cultures and the many arts, cultural and museum choices.
- The weather
- The weather
- The weather allows for almost year-round outdoor activities. The Hispanic culture.
- The weather and ability to be outdoors...the free community offerings/things to do.
- The weather and the outdoor activities.
- The weather and the unique environment.
- The weather increases potential for healthy lifestyle and outdoor activities. Don't really see too many other advantages. Many years ago I would have said it was safe.
- The weather makes it possible for a lot of outdoor activities and state health insurance (in my opinion) is really good.
- The weather provides maximum opportunity to be outdoors and active; the abundance and variety of wildlife and nature creates many opportunities to understand and become stewards of our planet and its inhabitants
- The weather, caring community, and organizations which plan for them, such as TSO, organized sports,
- The weather, sports programs such as AYSO soccer, swim teams.
- the weather, the U of A, the ECE programs at Pima
- The weather.
- The weather.
- The weather.
- The weather. Plenty of opportunities for outdoor activities.
- The wide open spaces to play.
- There are a lot of parks, recreation centers offering affordable programs, and children's programs at various arts organizations.
- There are many opportunities and activities for children in outdoor settings as well as indoor programs in the arts.
- There are many opportunities for children to participate and learn about the natural setting of Tucson as well as its cultural diversity.
- There are many places to let them explore nature: Mt Lemmon, Kit Peak, the various trails, etc. Also the weather is good for outdoor recreation.
- This is a place where children can be outdoors and interact with nature if encouraged to do so
- This is a relatively small community and should be a great place for children. There are plenty of parks and recreational opportunities.

- This is difficult for me to answer as our children were in their mid to late teens when we moved to Tucson. However, I do think that Tucson has outstanding environmental conditions and opportunities to interact with nature /wildlife.
- This is not something to which I've given much thought, but it may be that we've retained much of the positive small town atmosphere and attitudes. At least some of our kids live in child friendly neighborhoods and have access to relatively well performing schools.
- Tolerant society, relatively safe, access to natural areas.
- Tucson has a great natural setting, diverse people with many different ethnicities and socioeconomic backgrounds, great weather, affordable housing, great parks and museums.
- Tucson has some good schools and a lot of choices for activities. There are some great opportunities for kids to learn and get together with all different types of communities.
- Unique habitats and species
- Variety of activities and museums such as Flandrau, Children's museum, little league sports teams, etc
- Variety of opportunities for activities: sports and outdoors, cultural, educational, family fun
- We are people with a lot of interest of our young people-ours and others- that's why our community is special for everything
- We have a great library system.
- Weather
- Weather
- Weather
- Weather and outdoor activities.
- Weather enabling them to be outdoors
- Weather, environment, open space
- Weather, outdoor life style that encourages athletic activities, generally safe environment
- Weather, permitting a child to play outdoors; nature, extracurricular activities
- Weather, quality of life, U of A, Pima College
- Weather, safety, activities, employment
- Weather, Schools,(no better or worse than other towns) Activities if one participates, Sports, year around!!!
- Weather, they can be outside most of the year. Multi Cultural environment. Access to good higher education systems.
- With the exception of a few, we have good school districts.
- Wonderful opportunities to explore nature.
- Wonderful weather, wholesome values, community spirit and involvement, an awareness of nature, caring adults
- Year round good weather for outside activities.
- Yes, generally

## Question 2 – What are the biggest challenges facing young children in the greater Tucson area?

- #1 EDUCATION. there is no #2 and #3
- \* Lack of quality public school options (The Vail School District is an exception...) \* Small number of parks, community centers, libraries, and "cultural" destinations - especially in SE Tucson/Vail \* Many parts of Tucson are not pedestrian-friendly \* Many parts of Tucson are rundown and ugly
- 1) education 2) low density housing, zoning, schools that are too big lead to a lack of sense of community and safety
- 1. Low expectations from teachers and the system in general: for example UA SAT scores for acceptance is 1160 or some thing embarrassingly low. 2. Poverty
- 2nd to lowest expenditure per pupil on schools in the nation
- A horrible and under funded educational system
- A lack of gathering places for young people to mingle safely. They need creative stimulating environments where they can explore and discover the importance of community.
- A lack of well-paying jobs stemming from a lack of challenging industrial, financial and corporate sectors (instead there are warehouses, call centers, tourism, and of course DM & Raytheon)
- Access to drugs from across the border
- Access to health care and having a highly qualified teacher in every single classroom-- no matter the district that a child resides in.
- Access to infant-toddler child care for working families; rise in substance abuse and violence in families which affects child's growth and development overall; low quality child care settings
- Access to quality education, geographically isolated, limited choices for things to do for youngsters who are not interested in fine arts or athletics...
- Activities for 11-12 year olds until they get their drivers' license.
- Activities, culture, exposure to bigger opportunities
- Addictions of all kinds
- Affordable before and after school programs that are educational based. Safety from drive by abductions and potential abductions
- Affordable, quality child care; access to early literacy programs
- After school programs. Learning to read.
- Again, as a mentor most of my kids have had inadequate or undereducated parents. Most mentors will tell you that parents are usually their biggest problem.
- Availability to drugs, illiteracy and lack of really good schools for every child
- Bad parents
- Being born into economically stressed households or with parents who have drug and alcohol problems
- Being ranked second to last in the country in quality of our public schools. It's disgusting and embarrassing, if you don't believe, go to an amphitheatre middle school graduation this spring and sit there in the unairconditioned gymnasium. Again, the public schools in Tucson and Arizona are an embarrassment and I'll never regret anything more than having to have sent my kids to them. Look at the members of our state legislature to witness the scarring effects of an Arizona public school education.
- Being taught to take tests instead of be creative.
- Better public school educational opportunities.

- Caring and responsible parents are so important. If a parent is more interested in drinking or abusing drugs it makes for an almost impossible challenge for a city (Tucson).
- Charter, private and home-schooling systems weaken the public school systems. These systems seem to have the effect of diluting the energy and focus of the public school systems.
- Children are not coming to school ready to learn. Parents need to be shown how to get their kids ready to learn and be respectful of others in the classroom. Teachers spend way too much time on discipline issues.
- Choices in quality education.
- Conscientious parents who put the child's health & well being above material & selfish adult wishes
- Conservative population, weak child advocacy
- Crime
- Crime
- Crime & drugs
- Crime rate, quality of education
- Crime, degradation of environment, low emphasis placed by state on education overall
- Crime, environmental concerns (including water availability), education.
- Crime, safety, and drug use in our communities.
- Crime; some deteriorating neighborhoods that need the city to be proactive regarding demolition, etc; under funded public education and internal strife that undermines quality public education in the Tucson Unified School District; the refusal of the citizens to pass a budget override for the school district - this cripples the district when it comes to continuing to provide a quality public education to the children of Tucson. Also, the influx of legal and illegal immigrants into our school system, and unfunded mandates from the legislature just make it impossible to meet the needs of every child.
- Day care and low wages
- Declining quality of public school system
- Disconnection in our communities. Parents may not have good parenting skills and yet have no way to learn from others. Business and social services aren't always connected to do better things for the kids. We can't always unite in a common voice to overcome the barriers that face our community (drugs, violence, poverty) because we don't talk to each other. There is a lack of education about what IS best practice for children.
- Diversity and differences between the "haves" and the "have nots." There is a dramatic difference between the look and feel of the Northwest area and that of the South and Southwest areas and I suspect that, by the time they are in middle school, kids are very aware of that difference and may be adversely affected by it.
- Domestic & neighborhood violence
- Don't have kids, I wouldn't know
- Don't know
- Don't know.
- Drugs
- Drugs Not many places to "play" safely
- Drugs and bullies at school
- Drugs and mentally ill people we need to treat.
- Drugs and TV
- Drugs and under funded education
- Drugs, gangs

- Drugs, illegal aliens, economy, transportation
- Drugs, NEA dominated educational system, lack of parental support.
- Drugs, violence, poverty, theft, vandalism, etc.
- Economic stress on the household, crime/gang involvement, drugs
- Economic stress...thus all parents/caregivers in the workplace resulting in too much structured time (e.g. childcare/daycare) and not enough imaginative play-time and weakened parent-child bonds. Disparities in educational opportunities end up making this problem worse by providing the rich with expanded experiences and the poor with highly structured, static environments.
- Education
- Education
- Education
- Education
- Education - quality of TUSD! Safety and activities that are affordable.
- Education and public safety.
- Education finance shortfall, dangerous people, lack of mental health services
- Education quality and services for low income children
- Education quality that is swirling the bowl, lack of real job prospects upon graduation (shoveling trinkets and food at tourists is not a real job).
- Education resources
- Education system
- EDUCATION! Schools are under funded and clearly we have too many kids not completing high school and fewer still completing college.
- Education, drugs
- Education, education, education
- Education, education, education; low parental wages; overworked CPS workers
- Education, gangs
- Education, gangs
- Education, having them starting to learn at an early age.
- Education, in the sense that neighborhood schools are being threatened with closure. Under funding for bilingual education.
- Education, low family income, family and neighborhood violence
- Education.
- Education. If we could just get the local /state leaders to quick arguing over this and that, and have them commit the budgets to education, instead of teaching to a test, the little bright minds would become electrifying. In the meantime, support our teachers, extend the school day and educate our future leaders.
- Educational equality and drugs
- Educational funding.
- Educational system and support for parents are not what they should be.
- Educational system, crime, lack of adequate resources for children of low income families
- Educations system varies greatly depending on where you live; local job market is poor; poverty is a huge issue and related to it lack of adequate housing and crime
- Equal educational opportunities
- Extremely Poor schools
- Fair and equal access to education and healthcare.
- Families with low education and income are not able to get quality early education and access to health care.

- Fear of strangers. Lack of good adult role models. No connection with the natural world and few opportunities for physical activities.
- Financial issues facing families
- Finding good preschool care as well as an academic elementary school
- Finding safe areas to play and ride bikes
- Funding the war instead of social networks, challenges to their families in relation to jobs with advancement opportunities, reliable, flexible transportation, consumerism which narrows the horizon of adult possibilities for them.
- Funding!
- Gang violence Mediocre schools.
- Gangs and drugs. Bad parents that produce bad children that my kids have to tolerate when they are in school.
- Gangs and the perception of TUSD be an incompetent bunch of imbeciles.
- Gangs, drugs, crime, poor education, lack of productive/creative activities for kids after school and during weekends.
- Gangs, poor family structure (socialization), and poor economic situations. Bad economic situations.
- Getting a decent education
- Getting a decent education.
- Getting a good education and also being able to afford to get into college
- Getting a good education and being involved in sports and healthy activities.
- Getting a good education. Staying out of drugs and gangs.
- Getting a really solid, early understanding of reading and writing and arithmetic. If we could get children up to speed earlier in life their lives, the community's life and the US economy would all be strengthened.
- Getting around. Getting to places requires an adult and car. Getting inner city children out of an urban setting to experience the natural world. Schools with smaller classrooms. Standardized tests.
- Getting parents involved in their lives at school, making parents feel like they have a say in their children's education.
- Good child care and parents that have time to devote to caring for their children.
- Good early childhood education. Better Infrastructure. More free recreation areas. Access to free health care.....
- Good schools, good health
- Having activities to do which develop them and stimulate them. AND that they are interested in.
- Having parents who care enough to know how to raise children in an instructive and positive manner.
- Having role models to look up to in shaping and forming community
- Having support.
- Health care, alcohol and drugs, cost of childcare, and other out of school time activities.
- Higher quality education High quality entertainment and leisure opportunities
- Hopefully, young children should not have to face any really big challenges besides potty training and basic personal hygiene. If the question is really meant to ask about challenges facing our community in regard to young children, I would say that we need to improve our air and water quality, improve our horrible public school system, and improve the way we educate the public regarding basic child safety.

- I believe education and crime. Being able to properly educate our children has fallen from a priority to merely an issue of budgets and cuts. The crime that is out in the streets creates an unsafe environment for these children to live and play safely.
- I believe lower income neighborhoods suffer with poor facilities, not enough extra curricular activities- arts, music, p.e. cultural studies and the teachers are not paid enough, so the best and brightest people go work in other fields. I also think classroom size is too large overall so students suffer with not enough attention.
- I don't have young children
- I don't think what I see is unique to Tucson. Because of all the television, music and games I don't feel children can sit still and focus on learning activities. So much stimulus also creates nervousness and stress.
- I see a lot of poverty, crime, and safety issues for children in Tucson.
- I think that once youth get beyond age 10-11 - the community doesn't help to promote interesting - and diverse things - that are interesting for older youth. We seem to be intolerant of their ideas, the way they look, their interests - so we push them away. I think we send a message that we only value youth who are do everything we tell them to do - rather than encourage them to be part of the community.
- If you do not have access to the better schools in Tucson, there is not as much hope to bettering your social-economic standing.
- I'm actually concerned about my child growing up in Tucson with the drug and poverty that seems all around us. I'm also concerned about the ability to find good jobs. All our kids seem to move away to find good jobs.
- Immediate: way less than great schools, few good sports parks, crime immediate to long-term: unsustainable growth, poor mass transportation
- Insufficient dollars spent on education in state of Arizona
- Insufficient investment in schools, poorly paid teachers, lack of public transportation, drugs & gangs.
- K-12 education
- Lack of access to quality, affordable care; large numbers of children living in poverty; role models
- Lack of adequate educational opportunities
- Lack of adequate funding for public education which puts Tucson children at a disadvantage.
- Lack of adequate investment in local K-12 educational institutions.
- Lack of affordable before and after-school programs, lack of quality child care, lack of affordable dental and health services, predatory payday loan organizations that are causing their already struggling parents to further struggle financially, lack of safe outdoor spaces to play
- Lack of affordable, quality childcare, lack of economic opportunities for families, lack of high quality schools
- Lack of books in homes
- Lack of education funding - high drug rate and border crime.
- Lack of education funding and the drop out rate for Tucson schools.
- Lack of educational funding from the State. Violence.
- Lack of encouragement by parents and "dumbing-down" by teachers and administrators.
- Lack of excellent childcare Cost of childcare Lack of school readiness
- Lack of family support services that truly help people change over the long term
- Lack of family taking care of their children.
- Lack of financial investment in our schools and programs for under advantaged children.

- Lack of funding for early childhood learning and a commitment by the State to support childhood health, welfare, and education at levels commensurate with needs.
- Lack of funding for education. Underutilization of seniors and retired professionals in aiding the schools.
- Lack of funding for programs
- Lack of funding for youth programs, not enough parks, lack of spending on education, high teenage pregnancy means kids often have young unwed parents
- Lack of good education, inadequate public transportation, poverty
- Lack of good programs.
- Lack of good public education
- Lack of high quality child care and poor schools. In both cases this is due to the lack of community/legislative will to PAY for high quality education.
- Lack of highly qualified teachers in the school system. Low income families/low income jobs result in children lacking some resources needed to support development and education.
- Lack of neighborhood schools availability of drugs
- Lack of open space, parks etc. for play. Healthcare. Education for parents and community. Isolation due to the stringent demands of modern life of parents etc. Kids don't play together as much. Issues with education funding.
- Lack of pre-school education at affordable cost. Substandard public education. Drug trade, addicted parents Fatty diets
- Lack of professional opportunities post graduation; competing with undocumented children for gov't and community resources
- Lack of public spending on education.
- Lack of public transportation, a weak public education system.
- Lack of quality child care. High crime rate. Few if any restrictions/regulations for home child care providers. Large classroom sizes.
- Lack of recreational activities
- Lack of supervised after-school activities, low paid public school teachers not providing exceptional education, a top-heavy school district that is too large to be workable, too much crime, too many illegals sapping our health-care system
- Large classes, not enough help
- Large percentage of children come from homes where high school graduation is not a priority.
- Like anywhere else, the lack of parental involvement and emphasis on education.
- Limited access to resources in outlying areas, disconnect within the community, a lack of financial commitment to youth
- Limited educational opportunities: poor funding of schools, difficulty retaining teachers
- Limited funding for education
- Lousy P-12 education system.
- Low economic opportunity after HS or College.
- Low educational standards. Lack of commitment to education.
- Low funding for education... poor access (transportation, etc.) and lack of funds for some children to take advantage of opportunities
- Low funding for public education, lack of teachers because of low pay, lack of access to pre-K education for those of lower income
- Low wages and the general type of Tucson economy (lack of broad base high tech employment with high paying jobs) place a heavy burden on the community in the effort to fund a high standard of schooling and extra curricular activities.

- Lower standard of education
- Many schools and families don't have the resources to succeed. Health care is a problem for a lot of families.
- Most will never be offered a solid education, and few will be aware of how poor Arizona education is compared to the rest of the United States.
- Motivation Getting out of the House, Not enough summer programs.
- N/A (no children)
- Need for quality teachers, which will come with higher pay paying more attention to nutrition --- way too much fast food and processed food is contributing to childhood obesity more opportunities to develop life-long reading habit
- Need more after school activities for children of working parents.
- Needs: Adequate and affordable day care, getting better quality education, more parks and recreation facilities, affordable and plentiful summer activities (e.g. Botanical Gardens programs fill up almost the day they're open), health care, sidewalks and safe means of getting to and from playgrounds and schools
- Neighbor hood age appropriate recreation. Educational outreach in the arts and sciences.
- No parks, crime, quality preschool education, lack of cultural activities
- Not always having the opportunity to attend the best schools and participate in intriguing activities.
- Not being able to be a kid and play without 100% supervision. Crime happens everywhere even in your own backyard. The Children have "LOST THEIR FREEDON" to be kids. Too much crime in the city. Parks and Recreations are not organized and do not offer enough fee free programs to participate in. Parks and Recreation is not run efficiently and properly. Not enough activities i.e.; plays, concerts etc that are in the outlying areas of this ever growing city.
- Not enough ability to participate in healthy activities because of family income issues and parents both working.
- Not enough FREE things to do for low income families
- Not enough money
- Not enough money for education and educational programs including after school activities.
- Not enough places to safely play, or go have "adventures". And for too many, poverty, neglect, and drug and alcohol abuse of their parent/s.
- Not enough resources for all young children to provide them with what they need (and what their parents need) to be ready and eager to learn when they enter school.
- Numbers of predators on and off-line, access to health care, quality schools.
- Obesity. Gangs. Drugs.
- Obtaining a good education
- Offering all children birth to five affordable, high-quality child care
- Our education system (p-20) and funding therefore
- Overall lousy public schools
- Overcrowded class rooms and under funded schools
- Parent participation due to work needs, quality childcare
- Parents have safe and affordable day care and after school programs, they need safe parks and stronger communities
- Peer pressure.
- Pollution, crime rates, drug problems, poor schools equating to poor education, culture where education is not valued.

- Poor education
- Poor education Crime in some areas Lack of recreational areas
- Poor education opportunities, lack of accessible and affordable health resources, fear of immigration issues that precludes accessing available resources.
- Poor education options; lack of healthcare; parents who have no resources to be parents
- Poor education, lack of good mass transit
- Poor educational system through high school and low paying jobs.
- Poor funding for health care and education, lack of health insurance, low-wage jobs and high cost of housing for parents, lack of public will to invest in, and make accessible, state of the art child care and early education facilities, low teacher and child care provider salaries
- Poor public Education, lack of activities, lack of programs at parks and rec, lack of childcare
- Poor public school systems. Lack of well developed children's facilities (e.g. Compare the Children's museum in Indianapolis to the one in Tucson or even Phoenix).
- Poor public schools, crime
- Poor quality of schools, too much of this bi-lingual nonsense.
- Poor quality public schools
- Poor reputation of schools; inability to address children's safety and education.
- Poor state government.
- Poorly funded education, especially in the elementary schools, which is so critical to success in later school years.
- Poorly funded schools.
- Poorly funded, underachieving public education. Cycles of poverty.
- Poorly paid early childhood education staff. Lack of universal pre-school so many children begin Kindergarten poorly prepared and fall further behind. Lack of uniform high quality elementary schools due to low per pupil funding
- Poorly-funded school systems
- Poverty
- Poverty -- substandard and dangerous housing; little contact with parents (working); not enough adults to take a personal, sustained interest in them traffic -- a big and dangerous mess, slow down!; get people out of their cars and using public transportation
- Poverty and a really poor public education system
- Poverty and apathy.
- Poverty and busy parents
- Poverty and/or working parents- too tired from working constantly to have time or money for activities in question #1
- Poverty, hunger, strong education
- Poverty, lack of support for education
- Poverty, not enough parks and recreation areas... lack of focus... need for more social services that are developmentally appropriate... on and on
- Poverty, poor education systems, access to health care, safety, after school
- Poverty, poor school rankings, i.e., low in the national list, low graduation rates, lack of college diversity in town and in state (only state schools or for-profit schools, little emphasis on arts and culture in town in general, after school care programs sound like babysitting not helpful.
- Poverty.
- Poverty. Their parents struggle to make ends meet, find secure jobs, and have access to quality child care.

- Proper education and health care
- Providing quality public education in a safe environment
- Public education is not as good as it should be.
- Quality education
- Quality education, gangs, guns
- Quality education.
- Quality educational opportunities for all - the variability of education available to all children across the city is shocking
- Quality of Education Transportation
- Quality of education, quality after school recreation programs, quality day care
- Quality of education. State has not adequately funded schools, school day not long enough, charter schools have been a big mistake, taking children from regular schools has removed resources for the districts themselves.
- Quality of schools, bicycle safety/road issues, lack of support for bilingual education, air quality due to traffic and lack of good public transit options to reduce smog.
- Quality schools, affordable plus good quality day care
- Racism, low educational expectations, opportunities for varied careers
- Rampant criminality resulting from drug and migrant traffic.
- Sadly, we have a growing population whose parents work and do not have the time to spend with their children. These children end up on the streets, wasting their time away, and are influenced by people who don't have their best interests at heart. These kids make poor choices; end up in the system, and the population increases. These young people, some in my classroom, can be quite bright, but because they were not challenged they get bored, into trouble, and may end up on probation. There is a growing disconnect in Tucson among the next generation. Years before, immigrants wanted to receive an education; I see more 18-22 year olds who could care less. In this town, education doesn't seem to be as important as it is in other states. Advertisers make everything else in the world seem more important than staying in school and doing well. As a society we don't promote the very things that will help keep the United States on top of the world.
- Safety and school system
- Safety and support for a broad, quality education
- Safety and TUSD
- Safety. Parental apathy. Test based education systems.
- Safety. As a parent, you don't want to let your kids go play for fear that they will be in danger. Gangs are also a big problem for kids.
- School budgets taking away special programs. I am a great believer in elementary schools being located within neighborhoods - not on busy streets so children can walk safely to school
- School closings
- School closings, not enough teachers,
- School districts that operate on the premise that it's money not good teaching that brings results, safety, lack of supervision, low salaries, few role models
- School system could be improved
- School system is poorly operated and under funded,
- School systems are declining budget cuts in head start programs
- Schools and teachers
- Severe under funding of primary & secondary education. The high incident rate of adjunct instructors at PCC, as compared to full time professors / instructors.

- Short work day, level of supervision after school
- Since I don't have children I am not qualified to answer this question
- Some of our neighborhoods are pretty rough, some of our schools don't perform very well, and we partake of the great American plague: gangs.
- Speaking from personal experience, the expansion of the greater Tucson area to Sahuarita, Marana, Oro Valley, Vail/Corona de Tucson, Tortolita, etc. has led to a disproportionate lack of child related services - after school programs, day-care, children's activity centers in those areas. The services in Tucson proper haven't expanded to these areas, making it difficult for working households where both parents work to find daycare, after school care and age appropriate activities close by for their kids to participate in. I think this lack will contribute to increased juvenile delinquency in these areas if not addressed soon.
- Special education in Early Childhood. Also, there are not enough high quality EC care and education programs for every child in Tucson to have access.
- State funding for education is too low, health care insurance, school closings - traumatic for children
- State legislature that doesn't value education.
- Stay out of all the gangs in Tucson.
- Staying out of the area of Tucson where crime and gangs are rampant...and we all know where they are.
- Staying out of trouble, crime, lack of parental supervision
- Staying safe but in this day and age that's a luxury long gone.
- Struggle of families to stay afloat financially impacting family time; violent crime
- Struggling schools and poverty
- Sub par schools, poor public transportation
- Sufficient local and state support for formal education. Adequate low-income housing and social services.
- Superior education; drugs; existence of family network
- Terrible school system, embarrassingly low amt. of money spent per student, poor pay for teachers, problem attracting great teachers.
- That their parents have such limited opportunities for a hopeful future.
- The biggest challenge is the education system which has had awful leadership. In addition, the resistance of teachers unions to accept change such as vouchers stifles educational opportunity.
- The biggest challenge is the will to place the education as the top priority no matter what the other problems may seem to be demanding attention.
- The biggest challenges facing young children are the lack of good educational opportunities. Small student/teacher ratio for all classroom subjects; clean and functioning education facilities; degreed and certified teachers encouraged to continue their studies in higher education; opportunities to participate in sports and art without having mom and dad foot the bill for after school curriculum using community organizations.
- The challenges facing the young include the violence in the homes, gang violence and our total disregard for education. Arizona is near the bottom of the states in what it spends on education. I have a brother who refused a job in Arizona because of the schools...we have to spend much more money on our schools and teachers...these children are our future.
- The dysfunctional state of education K-12. The lack of financial support from the state legislators who think pathetically that we are spending too much on education already.

- The education systems is miserable.
- The fact that they have to be driven by car everywhere they want to go.
- The greatest problem is the lack of educational and recreational resources.
- The growing burden on our educational system ultimately affects the children. Budget cuts and school closings have become a necessary evil to keep the school districts going. The low cost of living in Tucson has become a double edged sword because lower property taxes means less to go around in supporting local government and districts.
- The growth of gang activity.
- The high divorce rate and the parents who have to work so many hours, that keep them away from their homes and children.
- The increments of gangsters and no information about the importance of going to school and get in the college.
- The lack of funding in our state budget for early childhood education.
- The lack of good public education.
- The less than great schools and inadequate state support for their education.
- The low-wage economy so that many children are growing up in economically disadvantaged households.
- The mediocre school system and the lack of political will to improve it.
- The proximity and ease of acquiring drugs, ranks right up there with a failure on the part of Arizona's legislature to adequately invest in our children's education.
- The public education system. If families can afford to send kids to private schools, they'll get a solid education. The public schools are suffering. Arizona ranks at or near the bottom of funding for schools and our teachers don't get paid what neighboring states pay.
- The public school system (especially TUSD) seems to face chronic financial woes-this negatively affects the learning process.
- The regular crime from gang, drug, and random shootings; TUSD's continuing problems, and the poor job market for mid-level workers
- The same as in most urban/semi-urban areas - many children have working parents, so extended child care and activities that keep kids safe and away from negative influences are a big need.
- The stresses on their parents
- The teacher to student ratio. Class size needs to be brought down considerably. One teacher to 20 students should be the maximum classroom size.
- The temptations for drugs; peer pressure and judgments contrary to the right in right or wrong decision making.
- The TUSD school district, in my opinion, is a real mess. Teachers are not the problem. Parent's are the problem - not all, but a lot of them do not give teachers the support they need by insisting their children follow rules and do schoolwork instead of making excuses and bargaining for special treatment when their child does not live up to expectations. When you add this to the usual peer pressure and exposure to drugs it is a big mess.
- The unwillingness of the public to make sacrifices in other parts of their lives to provide more effective investments in education. If the children are members of families that don't value education or are indoctrinated into the welfare culture so they have no aspirations to be responsible for their own lives then I suppose those would be big challenges.
- The using of taxes to fund charter schools

- There are a lot of challenges, but affordable high quality child care is number one. To add to that list would be highly trained professionals to work with the children, along with paying them a living wage.
- There are not enough local playgrounds. each development should be required to put one in
- Too many families where both parents have to work full-time; lack of public transportation
- Too many people not enough jobs. I believe one historical challenge is in the educational system where both the teachers and curriculum is neither culturally or historically relevant.
- Too many poor families. Schools seem to not be able to support the student in the best way. Crime and poor parenting - probably due to lack of parental support.
- Too much poverty, TUSD too big a school district to do a good job.
- Too much violence, not enough community support for children who face family problems.
- Transportation, safety.
- Troubled schools, lack of parental support for educational achievement, uneducated parents in low wage jobs
- Tucson doesn't control the population growth, or worry about transportation issues, and it considers cooperation more important than achievement.
- TUSD is mismanaged and poorly run. None of the school systems are to their full potential. Drugs are becoming more of a problem.
- TUSD is too big to be managed, failing schools, drugs in all schools, gangs in some schools
- Under funded public schools
- Under funding of education. Diminished public sector funding for non-profit organizations serving the needs of children, families and cultural activities.
- Underinvestment in schools, early childhood education, and family support services
- Uneven educational opportunities, lack of a vibrant small business environment for job growth and high rate of family instability
- Very poor education system. Lack of opportunities for outdoor and/or minimally-supervised play.
- Violence, drugs and gangs
- Water, regional cooperation - not just TUCSON making all the rules
- We have not raised young children in Tucson so it is difficult for me to say..
- Weak public school system.
- Weak schools, transient non-English speaking population, drugs, gangs
- Weaknesses in the integrated network of home, school, health, mental health and understanding of relationships.
- Well, I think education is the biggest challenge. The school system just doesn't measure up. For the younger kids, I think it's less of a problem, but the high school?? Also, there seems to be a lack of job and training opportunities for the older kids. For the younger kids, I think the lack of parks and recreational opportunism is a problem.
- Wide variation in quality of formal schooling

# Community Voice - Early Childhood Development

## 1. Welcome

Thank you for participating in the Community Voice Survey Series.

This is the fourth in the series of surveys and relates to early childhood development.

We look forward to reading your responses and hope to hear from you on future surveys as well. We will be sending out e-mail alerts every time a new survey is posted.

## 2.

1. In your opinion, what makes the greater Tucson area a good place for young children to grow up?

2. What are the biggest challenges facing young children in the greater Tucson area?

## 3.

3. For the next series of questions, we would like to know how much you agree with the following statements:

	1 - Completely disagree	2	3 - Neither agree, nor disagree	4	5 - Completely agree
It is important to have high quality early child care opportunities available for all children five and younger	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is important to have early educational opportunities for all children five and younger	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I know a great deal about high quality early child care opportunities available for all children five and younger in the greater Tucson area	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I know a great deal about early educational opportunities available for all children five and younger in the greater Tucson area	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## 4.

## Community Voice - Early Childhood Development

4. When thinking of how early child care and education may shape the life of a child and their subsequent impact on society, how much of an effect do you feel that early child care and education have on each of the following:

	1 - No impact at all	2	3	4	5 - Significant direct impact
A better prepared student who wishes to continue their education at the college/university level	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Greater self-esteem for the child throughout their life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Providing the community with a better educated work force	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reducing the crime rate within the community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A better quality of life for the child when they become an adult	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5.

5. How important do you feel each of the following is to having a child ready to begin school and learn for his or her first year?

	1 - Not at all important	2	3	4	5 - Very important
Having kindergarten readiness skills (e.g. knowing the alphabet, colors and shapes; recognizing rhyming words; counting to ten)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being socialized with other children of similar ages	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Having proper school supplies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Understanding "how" to learn	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Having experiences with a learning setting outside of the home	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being healthy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6.

For the questions on this page, we would like you to think about a time when you had to make a decision about child care for your child or someone close to you.

6. How beneficial would it have been/would it be to have a Quality Rating System (such as a five-star rating system) that offered evaluations of the different child care providers?

1 - Not at all beneficial

2

3

4

5 - Very beneficial

# Community Voice - Early Childhood Development

7. How useful do you feel that individual ratings for each of the following elements would be in an evaluation of the different child care providers?

	1 - Not at all useful	2	3	4	5 - Very useful
Socialization activities for children	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The physical facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Accreditation status	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Proper supplies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Experience of the staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Diversity of students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Education level of the staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teaching capabilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7.

8. How willing are you to support an increase to your taxes for:

	1 - Not at all willing	2	3	4	5 - Very willing
Creating greater access to early child care and education programs for children from low-income working families	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increasing the overall quality of early child care and education programs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increasing access to in-home parent education programs for low-income families with young children	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. How willing are you to get involved in early child care and education programs by doing each of the following:

	1 - Not at all willing	2	3	4	5 - Very willing
Promote family-friendly practices at your place of work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Donate needed goods to an early child care and education program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Donate money to an early child care and education program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Call, write or e-mail your local legislator to advocate for early child care and education programs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volunteer at a local child care center	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8.

Finally, we would like to get some additional information about you that will help us to better understand your opinions. This information will be used for classification purposes only, and as a reminder your identity will remain anonymous and all of your responses will remain completely confidential.

10. Do you have a child 5 years of age or younger in your household?

Yes

No

## Community Voice - Early Childhood Development

11. Which of the following best describes your total annual household income?

- Less than \$25,000
- Between \$25,000 and \$34,999
- Between \$35,000 and \$49,999
- Between \$50,000 and \$74,999
- Between \$75,000 and \$99,999
- \$100,000 or more

## 9. Thank You

Thank you for participating in our survey. We hope to hear from you on future surveys.

You can either close this window or click "done" to be taken to the Tucson Regional Town Hall web site.