

FIRST THINGS FIRST

About First Things First

Approved by Arizona voters, First Things First (FTF) works to ensure that your youngest children have access to quality early childhood experiences so they will start school healthy and ready to succeed. Across the state, FTF Regional Partnerships Councils - in collaboration with local leaders - identify the education and health needs of children birth through age 5 in their communities and fund strategies to address those needs.

First Things First Yuma Regional Partnership Council

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June Stillings

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www.firstthingsfirst.org/regions/cocopah-tribe/



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Follow us!

@AZFTF



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Watch Along!

First Things First

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Welcome to Cocopah Tribe Connections Guide

Families are a child's first and best teacher. It is important that parents and caregivers have the information and support they need to make the best choices.

Especially during the early years, when a child's brain grows and develops the most. In fact, 90% of a child's brain growth happens by age 5, before they start kindergarten. And scientific research has shown that a child's experiences in their early years affect how their brain develops.

That's why First Things First partners with families and communities to help kids have the positive, nurturing experiences they need to arrive at school ready to succeed. We do this through quality early care and education programs, preventive health efforts and supporting parents in their role as their child's first teachers.

The purpose of this guide is to allow organizations, businesses and other entities in the FTF Cocopah Tribe region to come together to create a family-centered, comprehensive, collaborative and high-quality early childhood system that supports the development, health and early education of all children birth through age 5 in the Cocopah Tribe region.

We hope you will find this information useful!

If you would like additional copies of this guide, would like to suggest corrections, or would like to be included in the next edition, please contact Francis Martinez, program coordination specialist, at 928.343.3020

Thank you for partnering with us as we work together to build a better future for our children, our families and our community!

Disclaimer

Disclaimer- **Cocopah Tribe Programs are only available to Cocopah Indian Tribal Members Only.** The publishers have taken every reasonable measure to ensure the information in this Resource Guide is accurate. In the event any information is inaccurate, the publishers assume no liability for damages incurred directly or indirectly as a result of incomplete, incorrect or omitted information. Inclusion of the agency in this directory does not constitute an endorsement of the agency nor their services. If you identify information that is incorrect, please notify Francis Martinez at First Things First, Yuma Regional Office at 928.343.3020 or fmartinez@firstthingsfirst.org.

Cocopah Indian Tribe

The Cocopah Indian Tribe, known as the River People, have lived along the lower Colorado River and delta for centuries, maintaining their traditions and culture throughout many political and environmental changes. The Cocopah are part of the greater Yuman-speaking peoples who have inhabited lands along the Colorado River for millennia have a largely oral language with histories being transmitted from generation to generation and through settler historical accounts documenting Cocopah life.

Established in 1917, the Cocopah Reservation comprises approximately 6,500 acres. Currently about 1,200 tribal members live and work on or near the Reservation. In 1964, the Tribe founded its first Constitution and established a Tribal Council.

Located 13 miles south of Yuma, AZ, the Reservation is home to Cocopah Casino, Cocopah Resort & Conference Center, Cocopah Rio Colorado Golf Course, Cocopah Museum, Cocopah RV & Golf Resort, Cocopah Speedway and Wild River Family Entertainment Center and Korner Store. Visitors enjoy golfing, gaming, shopping, learning about the Tribe's culture and taking in the great scenic beauty of the region.

www.cocopah.com



TABLE OF CONTENTS

BASIC NEEDS 9

HEAD START & PRESCHOOLS

Cocopah Day Care	9
Cocopah Head Start	9
Early Steps Program	9

HOUSING & NUTRITION RESOURCES

Cocopah Indian Housing and Development (CIHAD)	9
Cocopah Elder Nutrition	9

FAMILY SUPPORT 10-13

ART & RECREATION RESOURCE

Museum	10
Cultural Resources Department	10

EDUCATION & VOCATIONAL RESOURCES

Cocopah Education Department	12
Higher Education Assistance	12
Johnson O'Malley Program	12
Cocopah Summer Youth Program	12
Cocopah Vocational Training Center	12
Manpower	12

SOCIAL SERVICES & LEGAL RESOURCES

Cocopah Social Services	13
-------------------------------	----

LEGAL RESOURCES

Prosecutors Department	13
Cocopah Tribal Court	13

HEALTH & WELLNESS 14

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH & COUNSELING

Alcohol/Drug Abuse Prevention Program (ADAPP)	14
Cocopah Native Connections	14
Fort Yuma Indian Health Services (IHS)	14
Project LAUNCH	14
Tribal Health Maintenance Program (THMP)	14

PUBLIC SAFETY & EMERGENCY SERVICES 15

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

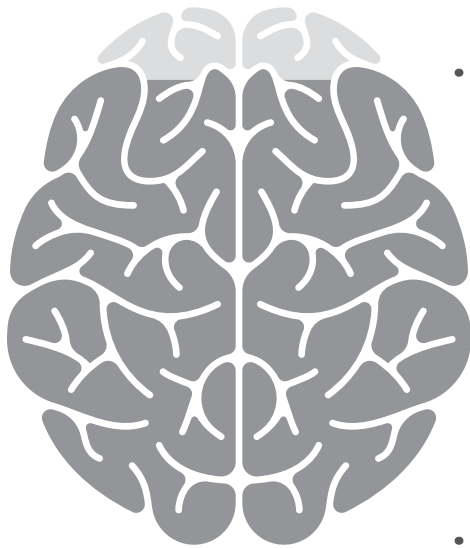
Environmental Protection Office (EPO)	15
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EMERGENCY READINESS

Office of Emergency Preparedness	15
Police Department	15
Fire Department	15

Why Early Childhood Matters

From birth to age 5, a child's brain grows more than at any other time in life. And early brain development has a lasting impact on a child's ability to learn and succeed in school and life. The quality of a child's experiences in the first few years of life – positive or negative – helps shape how their brain develops.



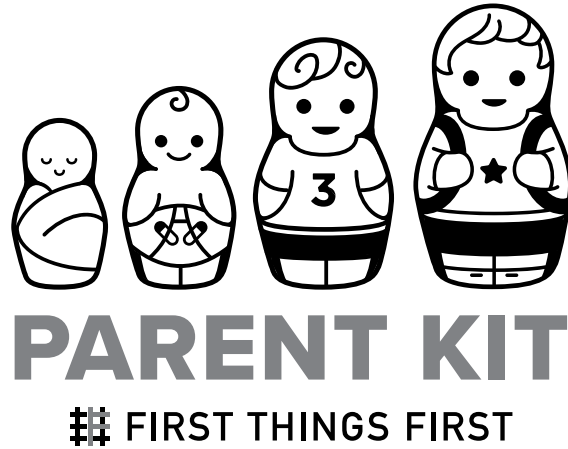
90%

of Brain Growth Happens Before Kindergarten

At birth, the average baby's brain is about a quarter of the size of the average adult brain. Incredibly, it doubles in size in the first year. It keeps growing to about 80% of adult size by age 3 and 90% – nearly full grown – by age 5.

The brain is the command center of the human body. A newborn baby has all of the brain cells (neurons) they'll have for the rest of their life, but it's the connections between these cells that really make the brain work. Brain connections enable us to move, think, communicate and do just about everything. The early childhood years are crucial for making these connections. At least one million new neural connections (synapses) are made every second, more than at any other time in life.

The early years are the best opportunity for a child's brain to develop the connections they need to be healthy, capable, successful adults. The connections needed for many important, higher-level abilities like motivation, self-regulation, problem solving and communication are formed in these early years – or not formed. It's much harder for these essential brain connections to be formed later in life.



First Things First provides the Arizona Parent Kit – free of charge – to parents of all newborns in the state before they leave the hospital or birthing center. It’s also available for checkout at libraries statewide. The Arizona Parent Kit contains resources to help parents support their child in each phase of their early development, from baby to toddler to preschooler.

These tools:

- Connect families to helpful resources through the Arizona Parent Guide, which provides 80 pages of information and resources to help parents care for their child, including tips about child development, health and safety, quality child care and school readiness.
- Promote early literacy with a board book and book mark to encourage parents to begin reading to and with their child from the very beginning.
- Support oral health with a dental kit, provided in partnership with Delta Dental of Arizona Foundation, containing tips about caring for a child’s teeth, as well as tooth brushes – one for a child, one for an adult – and fluoride toothpaste.
- Remind parents that expert help is a phone call away with a refrigerator magnet promoting the toll-free Birth to Five Helpline, which provides free advice and answers to the toughest parenting questions from nurses and other child development experts.

For more information visit:
[FirstThingsFirst.org/parent-kit](https://www.firstthingsfirst.org/parent-kit)



What is Quality First?

Quality First works with more than 1,000 child care and preschool providers in Arizona to improve the quality of early learning in ways that help young kids learn, grow and thrive. All of these programs are licensed and regulated, but participating in Quality First is voluntary. These programs are committed to quality improvement, going beyond regulatory requirements to help the infants, toddlers and preschoolers in their care be ready for success in school and beyond.

To learn more visit: www.qualityfirstaz.com

Quality matters

90% of a child's brain growth happens before age 5, and the positive, nurturing relationships young kids have with adults — from parents to child care and early learning professionals — shape their learning now and throughout their lives.

Quality First Scholarships

Early care and education providers enrolled in Quality First may be eligible to offer Quality First Scholarships, which help low-income families with children birth to age 5 afford quality child care. Many low-income families struggle to pay for quality child care. Some must choose between a job or leaving their children in care that is not their first choice. Quality First Scholarships help early care and education providers fill paid slots in their program and reimburse them for some of the expenses of providing quality (higher wages for more experienced and educated professionals, low staff-to-child ratios and small group sizes, etc.).

Quality First Scholarships: www.qualityfirstaz.com/FY22_Family_Application

Child care and Preschools Quality First Providers

Quality First works with child care and preschools providers across Arizona to improve the quality of their learning settings for children from birth to age 5. More than 1,000 child care centers, homes and preschools programs across the state of participate in Quality First. Each is supported with training and resources to help improve their programs in ways that nurture the emotional, social and academic development of every child.

Interested in becoming a Quality First Provider?

Visit: www.qualityfirstaz.com/apply-to-quality-first/ for more information.

BASIC NEEDS

Head Start & Preschools

Cocopah Day Care

The Cocopah Day Care is a child care center for children 3-12 years of age who are enrolled in a federally recognized tribe. Our priority is to provide child care for the Cocopah Indian Tribe and surrounding tribes. The Cocopah Day Care provides a fun educational environment for children. Staff are trained to provide the best child care experience.

14281 S Centre Ave
Somerton, AZ 85350
928.627.3729 Ext. 20
www.facebook.com/CocopahDaycare

Hours: Mon – Fri 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Languages offered: English
Cost: Free

Cocopah Head Start

Cocopah Head Start promotes school readiness of young children ages 3-5. We work with the families to set goals, meet needs, and provide their children with the start they need to get ahead in this world. Please come and visit us today.

17900 S Cottonwood Dr
Somerton, AZ 85350
928.627.3197
www.facebook.com/cocopahtribe

Hours: Mon-Fri 8 a.m. – 2:45 p.m.
Languages offered: English
Cost: Free

Early Steps Program

The Early Steps Program is a free voluntary home visitation program designed to help with the challenges of parenting and achieving goals that are important to you and your family. Your home visitor will work with you and your family in the areas of early childhood development, health, and the importance of early literacy. Being a parent is both very rewarding, but also challenging. Home visitation can guide you in helping your child grow, learn and thrive.

14515 S Veterans Dr
Somerton, AZ 85350
928.722.7536

Hours: Mon – Fri 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Languages offered: English
Cost: Free

Housing & Nutrition Resources

Cocopah Indian Housing and Development (CIHAD)

The Cocopah Indian Housing and Development (CIHAD) is an independent organization created by the Cocopah Tribe to establish a strong cohesive and financially stable community. CIHAD exists to provide safe, decent and sanitary housing for every tribal member and to encourage members already living on the Reservation to remain and to encourage members now living off-reservation to return.

10488 W Steamboat St
Somerton, AZ 85350
928.627.8863
E-mail: rrobles@ontherez.org

Hours: Mon.- Fri. 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Languages offered: English
Cost: Free

Cocopah Elder Nutrition

The Cocopah Elder Nutrition program provides Cocopah Tribal Members who are 55 years or older the following services: Home delivered meals, transportation, information and referral services, nutrition counseling, support services, advocacy and low-income home energy assistance.

14515 S Veterans Dr
Somerton AZ 85350
928.627.1148

Hours: Mon.- Fri. 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Languages offered: English
Cost: Free

FAMILY SUPPORT

Art & Recreation Resources

Museum

Built in 1996, the Cocopah Museum and Cultural Center feature exhibits on history and culture, meeting spaces, and a gift shop. The Cocopah Museum is a recognized federal repository and its exhibits feature objects and depictions of Cocopah history and culture. Museum guests will see examples of traditional clothing such as bark skirts and leather sandals, modern-day beadwork, pottery, traditional tattoo designs, musical instruments and the Cocopah warriors' display.

14533 S Veterans Dr
Somerton, AZ 85350
928.627.1992
www.cocopah.com/museum

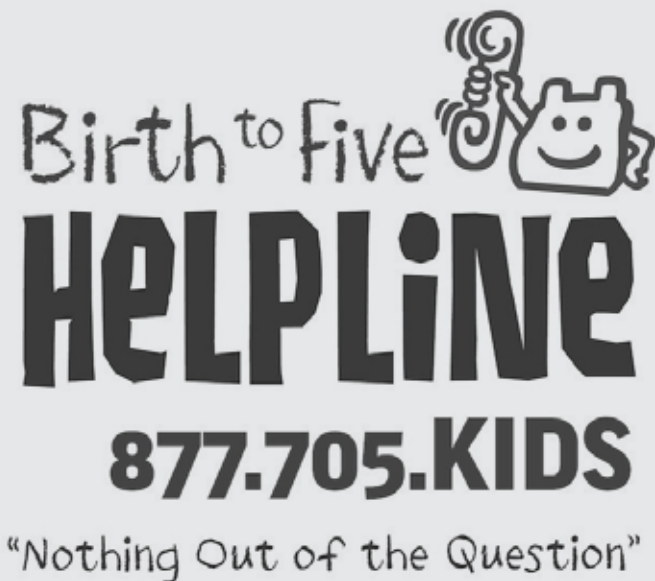
Hours: Mon - Fri 8 a.m.-5p.m.
Languages offered: English
Cost: Free

Cultural Resources Department

The Cocopah Cultural Resources Department serves the Cocopah community by protecting cultural resources, both past and present, as well as engaging in programs to build a brighter future for the Cocopah culture. Cocopah Cultural Resources works with government departments and agencies, both within the Cocopah Tribal Government and with outside organizations to ensure the protection of cultural resources and education about the Cocopah community. Cocopah Cultural Resources also assists Cocopah tribal members who wish to access traditional sites or need traditional plants/animals/knowledge for cultural practices.

14529 S Veterans Dr
Somerton, AZ 85350
928.627.4849
www.facebook.com/cocopahmuseum

Hours: Mon-Fri 8a.m.-5p.m.
Languages offered: English
Cost: Free



birthtofivehelpline.org

Download the FREE Birth to Five Helpline app!



Parenting doesn't come with a handbook.

The Birth to Five Helpline from Southwest Human Development is a free service open to all Arizona families with young children looking for the latest child development information from experts in the field. Early childhood professionals can also take advantage of the free program.

Topics addressed include:

- Sleep
- Health and Nutrition
- Safety
- Challenging Behaviors
- Feeding and Eating
- General Child Development
- Potty Training
- Fussiness/Colic
- Parenting
- And more!

You can call the Helpline to speak with one of our bilingual (English/Spanish) early childhood specialists, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

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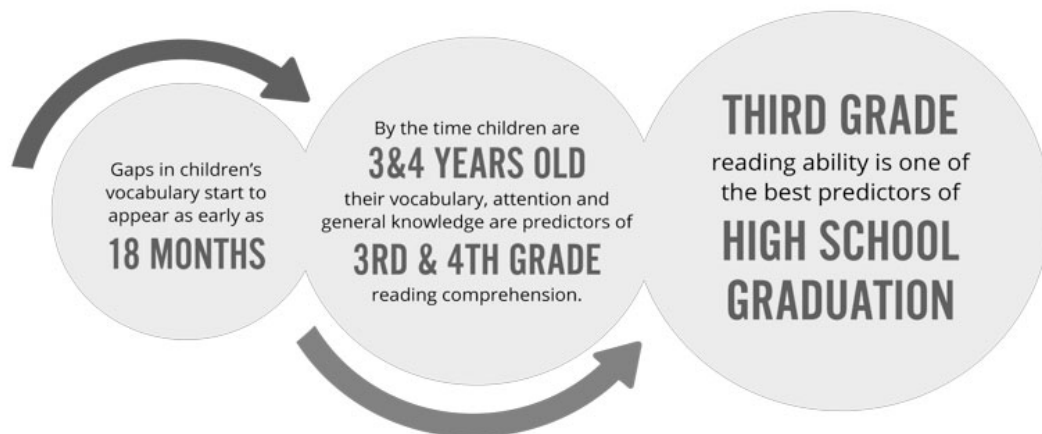
FAMILY SUPPORT

Reading is vital to a child's ability to learn and be successful in school. And the early literacy skills needed to be a good reader – like language and vocabulary – start developing from birth. But it doesn't happen automatically. A child's brain is not pre-wired for reading.



When babies and toddlers hear words and language from caring adults, their brains develop the important connections needed to learn how to read. Studies show that children whose parents and caregivers regularly talk and read with them develop larger vocabularies, become better readers and do better in school. That's because the first few years of a child's life are when the brain grows and develops the most, and a child's experiences in these early years affect how their brain develops.

Language and early literacy developments starts from the very beginning. Babies are listening in utero, and once they're born, they're communicating through eye contact, facial expressions, crying, smiles and touch. When adults respond with words, conversation and attention, it helps build the child's brain in ways that promote healthy development and learning.



For more information visit:
[FirstThingsFirst.org/early-literacy](https://www.firstthingsfirst.org/early-literacy)

FAMILY SUPPORT

Education & Vocational Resources

Cocopah Education Department

The Education Department exists to address the primary and secondary education issues and concerns of the Cocopah Indian Nation by providing information and funding opportunities which assist the maximum number of enrolled Cocopah Indian students in grades K-12 and higher education.

Programs

■ Higher Education Assistance

The Cocopah Education Department will aid in the funding of graduating high school juniors and seniors with their college or university admissions application fees. The Cocopah Education Department will assist with college or university fees for students who qualify. For more information, contact the Education Department.

■ Johnson O'Malley Program

The Johnson O'Malley program is a math and reading program, with cultural and traditional values integrated for school age children entering kindergarten through 12th grade. The Johnson O'Malley Program is held during the summer months so all Native American school-aged children can participate.

■ Cocopah Summer Youth Program

Cocopah Summer Youth Program is an employment program that is available to high school students who meet the specified criteria and have successfully completed an academic school year. The Summer Youth Program is a four to six-week program that allows selected students to experience on-the-job training as well as learn how Cocopah Tribal Offices operate on a day-to-day basis. Applicants must be 15 years of age on or before June 1 of the program year and not beyond 18 years of age. The applicants must have earned their credits from the previous school year, completed one year of high school, not exceeded more than five unexcused absences per semester, and be registered in high school for the next academic year. Students must be an enrolled Cocopah Tribal member, no pending Cocopah Tribal enrollments. Eligible youth must be high school students registered and attending a State funded school, or State recognized public school. Students selected for employment are subject to a pre-employment drug screen and random drug screens thereafter. Students are required to complete an application for the program and return it to the Cocopah Education Department by the deadline date.

14514 S Veterans Dr
Somerton, AZ 85350
928.627.4973

www.cocopah.com/documents

Facebook: www.facebook.com/cocopahtribe

Hours: Mon.- Fri. 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Languages offered: English

Cost: Free

Cocopah Vocational Training Center

The goal of the Cocopah Vocational Training Center is to enable Tribal Members to find unsubsidized employment by providing the education and vocational skills required to be competitive in today's job market.

14250 S Ave I
Somerton, AZ 85350
928.627.8026

Hours: Mon.- Fri. 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Languages offered: English

Cost: Free

ManPower

Manpower provides GED and on the job training services for adults. Additionally, emergency services and food assistance are also provided.

9803 W Veterans Pl
Somerton AZ 85350
928.210.4163

Hours: Mon.- Fri. 8 a.m – 5 p.m.

Languages offered: English

Cost: Free

FAMILY SUPPORT

Social Services & Legal Resources

Cocopah Social Services

Cocopah Social Services provides support and services to individuals, families and the Cocopah community to ensure family and community unity. The services the department provides are Child & Adult Protection, enforcement of the Indian Child Welfare Act, and assisting community members in finding & applying for services from other agencies. Financial assistance is limited to foster care payments to foster parents and group homes for Cocopah wards and vulnerable adults of the Court. The Department acts as Fiduciary for Tribal members and medical power of attorneys as ordered by Cocopah Court.

14515 S Veteran Dr
Somerton AZ 85350
928.627.3729

Hours: Mon-Fri 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Languages offered: English

Cost: Free

Legal Resources

Prosecutors Department

14500 S Veterans Dr
Somerton, AZ 85350
928.627.2025

Cocopah Tribal Court

9761 Veterans Pl
Somerton, AZ 85350
928.627.2550 Ext 7507

Behavioral Health & Family Medicine

Alcohol/Drug Abuse Prevention Program (ADAPP)

The Cocopah Alcohol and Drug Prevention Program (ADAPP) delivers culturally sensitive and competent substance abuse/dependence treatment, education and prevention services to Cocopah tribal members. The goal of ADAPP is to improve functioning and relational stability thereby helping clients to overcome barriers and become productive members of their community and society.

Perry Thompson, ADAPP Director
9803 Veterans Pl
Somerton, AZ 85350
928.627.2161
Email: adapp@cocopah.com
Hours: Mon.- Fri. 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Languages offered: English
Cost: Free

Cocopah Native Connections

Cocopah Native Connections mission is to empower the community to prevent youth suicide and substance misuse by promoting body, mind and spirit wellbeing to establish balance in their lives. Native Connections services include awareness training, suicide prevention coalitions, screening for depression, suicides and substance abuse, youth togetherness activities, behavioral health referrals, youth after-school program, postvention services, at-risk youth well-check visits and youth counseling services. Native Connection services are available for all Cocopah youth from 9 to 24 years of age.

19515 S Veterans Dr
Somerton, AZ 85350
928.655.3237
www.cocopah.com/departments
Facebook: www.facebook.com/Cocopah-Native-Connections
Hours: Mon.- Fri. 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Languages offered: English,
Cost: Free

Fort Yuma Indian Health Services (IHS)

The Cocopah Tribe is served by the Fort Yuma Indian Health Services (IHS). The center provides patient centered medical services in the areas of acute illness, behavioral health counseling, chronic illness management, dental care, laboratory, nutrition, pediatrics, pharmacy, physical therapy, public health nursing, preventive care, social services, and wellness care.

Fort Yuma Health Center
401 Picacho Rd
Winterhaven, CA 92283
760.572.4100
Toll Free: 1.800-862-4911
Weekends and After Hours Nurse-Line: 1.866.896.1585
Pharmacy: 760.572.4119
Dental: 760.572.4226
Hours: Mon-Wed, Fri, 8 a.m. -5 p.m.; Thu. 10 a.m.-5p.m.
Languages Offered: English Cost: Free

Project LAUNCH

Cocopah Project LAUNCH promotes whole life wellness through early childhood mental health consultation and development focused on Cocopah families and caregivers with children ages 0-8. The program seeks to improve awareness of mental health to our community through education, promote sustainability, provide workforce development, and create a bridge to link services among existing tribal departments.

14526 S Veterans Dr
Somerton AZ 85350
928.627.2681
www.facebook.com/cocopahthmp
Hours: Mon.- Fri. 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Languages offered: English
Cost: Free

Tribal Health Maintenance Programs (THMP)

THMP exists to provide programs and services to support the wellness (mind and body) and the healthcare needs of tribal members (Community) to maintain and/or improve the well-being and quality of life.

14526 S Veterans Dr
Somerton, AZ 85350
928.627.2681
www.facebook.com/cocopahthmp
Hours: Mon-Fri 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Languages offered: English
Cost: Free

PUBLIC SAFETY & EMERGENCY SERVICES

Environmental Protection

Environmental Protection Office (EPO)

Jennifer Alspach, EPO Director
14500 S Veterans Dr
Somerton, AZ 85350
928.627.2025
alspachj@cocopah.com

Emergency Readiness

Office of Emergency Preparedness

14500 S Veterans Dr
Somerton, AZ 85350
928.750.6612
<http://www.cocopah.com/oem/>

Fire Department

Somerton/Cocopah Fire Department
445 E Main St
Somerton, AZ 85350
928.722.7381

Police Department

Cocopah Police Department
14540 S Veterans Dr
Somerton, AZ 85350
928.627.8857

FIRST THINGS FIRST



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[FIRSTTHINGSFIRST.ORG/REGIONS/COCOPAH-TRIBE/](https://firstthingsfirst.org/regions/cocopah-tribe/)