



“In our own lives, here in the world, we all have an opportunity to do ‘good things’ on a daily basis for others and to do them in an unselfish manner... For me, managing the stewardship of charitable giving is a moment-to-moment dignified responsibility of a truly high calling in human affairs and human relations.”

VIRGINIA G. PIPER

## #PiperTrustMoments

Celebrating 20 Years of Moments

**JUNE 20, 2019**

Welcome to the second edition of #PiperTrustMoments, our yearlong celebration of the community’s 20-year partnership with Piper Trust.

Piper Trust was officially established on June 15, 1999, so we think it’s fitting that this June issue looks back at one of our earliest initiatives. Marilee Dal Pra, Piper Trust’s former (and beloved!) longtime vice president of programs, and now CEO of First Things First, graciously shared her insights about how this Piper Trust initiative, launched long ago, built a coalition to create the *Arizona Parent Kit* that is still touching young lives today.

From its inception, Piper Trust has been committed to the belief that children deserve a happy, healthy, safe childhood. This dedication stems from Virginia Piper herself, who made numerous gifts during her lifetime to nonprofits supporting the early and healthy development

of children. One of these organizations was Child Crisis Arizona, which received a \$750,000 bequest from Virginia.

Hear what Child Crisis Arizona CEO Torrie Taj had to say about this grant, one of her organization’s own #PiperTrustMoments.



Warmly,

Mary Jane Rynd  
 President and CEO

### GRANTMAKING SPOTLIGHT

## MARILEE DAL PRA ON THE ‘ARIZONA PARENT KIT’

“Through my work at Piper Trust, I got to witness the transformation that happens when you provide resources at the earliest stages in the life cycle,” said Marilee Dal Pra, now CEO of First Things First. “That fueled my passion to continue working in early childhood, which led me to First Things First.”



Dal Pra at the *Parent Kit* launch, 2006.

One example is the *Arizona Parent Kit*, which Dal Pra helped create more than a decade ago, when she was a program officer at Piper Trust. Akin to a “baby instruction manual,” it helps new parents understand the importance of a child’s early years and their role in helping their child grow up happy, healthy, and ready to succeed.

“The Trust was investing in responsive grants to help nonprofits better serve families with young children,” Dal Pra said. “They recognized that many early childhood partners were working to get quality information to families, but were struggling to achieve scale.”

So the Trust convened a group of community partners to create the *Parent Kit*. The Arizona Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Department of Health Services, early childhood providers, and other child advocates collaborated on a resource that would serve the community. “That was really important because it helped validate that it wasn’t just Piper Trust’s initiative. It was the community’s initiative,” Dal Pra said.

In 2009, the *Parent Kit* transitioned from Piper Trust handling the *Kit* administration to First Things First. Since 2009, about 700,000 parents and caregivers statewide have received the *Kit* before leaving a hospital or birthing

center with their newborn. The *Parent Kit* contains resources to help parents navigate their children’s first critical years, including information on safety, ages and stages of development, promoting positive brain growth, nutrition, dealing with challenging behaviors, and quality child care. Available in English and Spanish, the *Kit* also includes a hardbound baby book—because studies suggest that having books in the home has more impact on student success than the parents’ educational levels.

“Everyone involved with the creation of the *Kit* agreed that the book needed to be included. It’s a simple way to encourage parents to read to their children, which is the foundation for literacy.”

The *Kit* continues to evolve to meet the needs of today’s parents. All of the content is available in English and Spanish on the First Things First [website](#). It is also mobile-friendly and searchable, so parents can get the information they need at their fingertips. “It’s a way of letting families know that we understand parenting is hard, that we value them as their child’s first teachers, and that we want to support them,” Dal Pra said.



Dal Pra reading to students at Tots Unlimited, one of First Things First’s Quality First child care providers, September 2018.

With her unique history at Piper Trust and First Things First, Dal Pra has had a front-row seat to the Trust’s 20 years of investments. “The work, partnerships, and some of the early, very creative investments Piper Trust made are nearly two decades old and living on,” she said. “It’s hard to capture in words the value of what the Trust does and the number of lives touched by it. Working now on the outside among our early childhood partners, I see the impact of Piper Trust’s foresight—it is stunning.”

## A SPECIAL VIRGINIA PIPER MOMENT



Virginia Piper with her grandniece, 1971.

While visiting a local nonprofit, a visibly abused little boy reached for Virginia—she scooped him up and they embraced. This moment reinforced Virginia’s commitment to significantly support efforts that contribute to children’s healthy growth and development.

SHARE A MOMENT

THERE ARE ALL KINDS OF MOMENTS IN GIVING

SHARE YOURS  
 #PiperTrustMoments

### ABOUT

Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust supports organizations that enrich health, well-being, and opportunity for the people of Maricopa County, Arizona.

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