

GEORGETOWN COUNTY



Getting children ready for school.



Early Identification Resource
and Referral
(Includes PATHS Group Parenting
and Hispanic Community Outreach)

BabyNet

First Steps 4K

Annual Report

2015-16



OUR VISION:

Every South Carolina child
will arrive at kindergarten
ready to succeed.



By The Numbers

Indicator	SC	Georgetown County
Children Under Five	289,990	2,872
Children In Poverty	26.4%	31.6%
3 rd Graders Below Standard in Reading	21.1%	20.9%
Births to Mothers With Less Than a High School Diploma	15.7%	14.9%

KIDS COUNT data provided by



- Since inception, Georgetown First Steps has leveraged **\$3,186,473.98** from sources outside state government. That's **\$.66** for every dollar received.
- Reached **14 families** through our **PATHS Parenting Program**.
- Improved parenting practices through **11 Group Parenting Workshops**.
- Distributed **2,359 BabyNet/ Child Find materials**.
- Served **147 children** through our **Early Identification resource and Referral Program**.
- **Screened 11 children for developmental delays** and referred to services as needed.
- Placed **739 books** in the hands of young children.
- **Total Children Served in FY16: 249**

Georgetown County First Steps

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A message from...

Carol Daly, Executive Director

Many families rely on child care from the time their children are infants and well into the school years. Child care can be a rich experience in which children and their families gain a sense of belonging to a supportive community. Research shows that all children can benefit from participating in high-quality child care programs that work closely with family members and provide their children with environments, materials, and relationships that enrich learning and development. It is important that we provide the kind of learning environments and care necessary for all children to be successful in the early years as well as in school and later in life.

To that end, I am pleased to present the Georgetown First Steps Early Head Start Program. Through this program, our community's neediest children receive the education needed to meet their developmental milestones. These services include:

Early Learning: Teachers facilitate individualized learning experiences to promote children's readiness for school and beyond. Through planned and spontaneous instruction, relationships with adults, and play, children grow in language and literacy, early math and science concepts, and social and emotional development.

Health: Children receive health and development screenings, nutritious meals, oral health and mental health support. Programs connect families with medical, dental, and mental health services, and ensure that children receive the services they need.

Family Well-Being: Programs support and strengthen parent-child relationships and engage families around children's learning and development. Parents and families are supported in achieving their own goals. Such as housing stability, continued education, and financial security.

The purpose of this report is to share our strategies, resources, and stories as we promote belonging for all children. We invite foundations, lawmakers, and collaborative partners to join in on this wonderful journey.



Healthy Start



Family Strengthening



Early Intervention



Quality Child Care



Early Education



School Transition

County Programs

- Early Identification Resource and Referral
- Week of the Young Child Celebrations
- Community Outreach

State Programs

- BabyNet
- First Steps 4k

What We Do

Each of the six color blocks of the First Steps logo represents a core area of service, outlining our comprehensive strategy to prepare children for long-term school success.

With **measurable outcomes across each of its six school readiness strategy areas**, First Steps is getting results.



Healthy Start

We begin with a focus on providing a healthy start to life. This includes prenatal and post-partum services for both mother and baby. In 2007, First Steps collaborated with key philanthropic and agency partners to bring Nurse-Family Partnership to SC having a significant impact on reducing premature births and Medicaid costs.



Quality Childcare

Quality childcare starts with quality childcare providers. Our quality enhancement and training strategies lead to improved teacher-student interaction, which research shows has a significant impact on a child's development and success in school.



Family Strengthening

Our home visitation strategies, such as Parents as Teachers, Parent-Child Home and Early Steps to School Success, are helping parents understand their responsibilities to care for and be positive models for their children. As a result of First Steps' intervention and parenting support, 66% of clients initially assessed at "low" levels of parenting have achieved moderate or high levels of parenting skill.



Early Education

Private-public partnerships through First Steps 4K have led to significant cost efficiencies in the delivery of publicly funded 4K. One recent analysis suggests First Steps is achieving comparable results, without the need for costly capital construction, for 80 cents on the dollar.



Early Intervention

According to recent federal evaluations, outcomes for clients participating in BabyNet early intervention programs are above national averages. BabyNet matches the special needs of infants and toddlers who have disabilities and/or developmental delays with customized, community-based resources.



School Transition

Each of the corresponding blocks of services leads ultimately to the goal of transitioning children successfully to school. Programs like Countdown to Kindergarten and From Day One to Grade One are ultimately preparing children for school success.

Based on the needs of our community, Georgetown County First Steps focuses its investments in Early Intervention, Family Strengthening, and Early Education.

Early Identification Resource and Referral

Identifying and referring children with possible developmental delays can help assure school readiness.

Program Description

The Early Identification Resource & Referral Program connects children and families to resources for school readiness, specifically the BabyNet program, as well as family strengthening, and basic need resources. First Steps' Early Identification and Referral (EIR&R) program serves families of young children with suspected delays in development and coordinates public awareness for BabyNet services, acting as a local portal to connect families to community-based services they may need or desire to ensure the school readiness of their children.

EI&R services include:

1. Screenings (developmental, vision, hearing) for children ages birth to 5 years with suspected delays in development
2. Referrals, based up the screening results, to appropriate community resources. This could include the local BabyNet System Point of Entry Office, the local school district, and/or support services such as speech therapy, physical therapy, and programs in libraries and other community resources.
3. Parent information including strategies to monitor growth and development.

Our EIR&R program:

- ✓ Provides early detection of developmental delays and health issues
- ✓ Promotes services and activities that promote child development
- ✓ Increases children's school readiness and school success

This year, through our Early Identification Resource and Referral program, GCFS:

- ✓ Served 147 children
- ✓ Distributed 2,359 BabyNet/ Child Find materials.
- ✓ Screened and referred 11 children to BabyNet and/or other services as needed.

Thank you to our partners!

- ✚ SCFS BabyNet Office
- ✚ Georgetown County School District- Child Find Program
- ✚ Georgetown Housing Authority
- ✚ WellCare Health Plans, Inc.
- ✚ Cornerstone Support Services

Why Early Identification Works

Research has shown that the time between birth and age 36 months is a critical developmental period in a child's life. These months offer a window of opportunity that will not be available later. Early intervention programs minimize, and in some cases, prevent delays in development of infants and toddlers with disabilities.

This program can decrease the need for special education and related services when a child enters school, and increase independence.

Children whose special needs are identified and addressed during these crucial early years have a greater chance of reaching their full potential.



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Parents play a critical role in their child's development.

Group Parenting

Georgetown County First Steps is a portal of information assistance and community support for families. Through our monthly parenting program in partnership with the Georgetown Housing Authority, WellCare Health Plans, Inc., and Cornerstone Support Services we help each family construct a solid foundation from which to foster the growth of their young children. Through this program we inform parents about the importance of Early Intervention and what early signs to look for.

Parenting topics this year included Early Intervention, Early Literacy and Language Skills, Taming Toddler Tantrums, School Readiness, Positive Parenting, Health and Nutrition, and Stress Management information for parents. Each participant also received a free children's book at each of the sessions. Light refreshments and door prizes were provided.



This year, through our PATHS Group Parenting Program, GCFS:

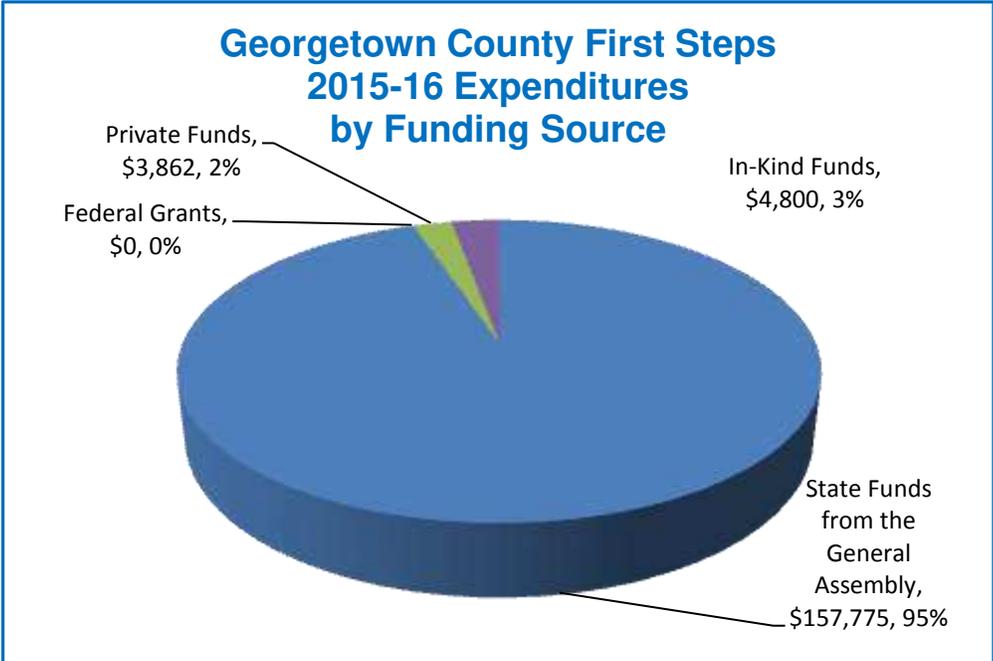
- ✓ **Provided 11 parent sessions**
- ✓ **Impacted 14 families**
- ✓ **Served 17 children between the ages of 0-5 years of age**



Hispanic Outreach

Our Bilingual Community Coordinator has been able to reach out to the Hispanic families, just as we have with our other families to connect them to resources they need in our community. In addition, the Georgetown County First Steps partnership has built a strong relationship with the Georgetown County School District Child Find office. Our coordinator has been serving as the Hispanic translator for their program for the past 3 years; she ensures that our non-English speaking children receive the early intervention services they need to be prepared to start school healthy, happy, and ready to learn. This year we were able to serve 13 families through our Hispanic Outreach Program.

Financial Impact



Total 2015-16 Expenditures: \$166,437

State Funds Leveraged in 2015-16*: 5.49 %

*Percentage of state dollars matched by additional federal, private, and/or in-kind funds

2015-16 Expenditures by Strategy

	State \$	Federal \$	Private \$	In-Kind \$	Total \$	% of 2015-16 Expenditures
Administrative Support	\$30,530	\$0	\$450	\$0	\$30,980	19%
Programmatic Support	\$27,752	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$27,752	17%
Parenting Training	\$47,254	\$0	\$866	\$0	\$48,120	29%
Early Identification Referrals	\$52,239	\$0	\$2,546	\$4,800	\$59,585	36%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$157,775	\$0	\$3,862	\$4,800	\$166,437	

Unaudited numbers for the period July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016

Since inception, Georgetown First Steps has leveraged \$3,186,473.98 from sources outside of state government. That's 66 cents for every state dollar.

Through our Community Outreach Program we provide information about Early Intervention Resource and Referral, Family Strengthening, and Early Education Programs. We also give free books to young children birth to 5. Here are the events that Georgetown County First Steps participated in this year.

Every year Georgetown County First Steps participates in the Halloween Trick-or-Treat event hosted by the Georgetown County School District. This year, First Steps distributed **over 200 books** to young children from various elementary schools and child care centers.



In October 2015, GC First Steps participated in the Flood Relief event held at the Beck Recreation Center. We were able to provide a total of **155 free coloring books to young children affected by the flooding**, as well as hand out information about Early Intervention and Parenting.

GC First Steps held their Annual Holiday Party at the Georgetown Housing Authority on December 15, 2015. Our special guest, Santa Claus, handed out gift bags filled with books. The children were also able to take a photo with Santa. Brunch and door prizes were provided. We served **36 children** and gave out **252 books**.



Izmira "Mira" Palomares from WellCare Health Plans held several Community Baby Showers throughout Georgetown County. These baby showers are for expectant moms and moms who have had a baby in the last 6 months. GC First Steps was there to provide information about BabyNet, PATHS Parenting Program, Dolly Parton Imagination Library, free baby items, free parenting magazines, and free baby books.

Serving the Community after a Disaster

In October of 2015, Georgetown County was impacted by historic levels of rainfall and subsequent flooding. Many county roads were washed out and the National Weather Service issued flash flood warnings that persisted for weeks. Unfortunately, a large number of families were forced to leave their homes as flood waters rose. On October 5th, President Obama issued a major disaster declaration for the county and the state.



Flood Relief for Our Child Care Providers

Through material and monetary donations from the Cliff Ellis Foundation, Saluda County First Steps, and Kaplan Early Learning Company we were able to hold a Grab-and-Take event for the child care centers affected by the flooding Georgetown. The providers received new and gently used items such as books, diaper pails, booster seats, toys, and furniture. Georgetown County First Steps was able to serve a total of **8 child care centers**.



Celebrating Week of the Young Child, April 10- 16, 2016

Every year, thousands of young children and their teachers and families across the county join NAEYC for an exciting, weeklong celebration of early learning! This year's themes included:

- Music Monday: We kicked off the week with a day about exploring how children learn through song and dance.
- Taco Tuesday: We promoted healthy eating habits through cooking. This was about more than just cheese and salsa- it was about giving children the opportunity to put their own creative spin on the popular dish, all while teaching healthy eating habits!
- Work Together Wednesday: Georgetown County First Steps celebrated with a field trip to Brookegreen Gardens! We had **over 70 children** attend!
- Artsy Thursday: We celebrated creativity and expression with open-ended art experiences that helped children solve, think creatively, and express themselves.
- Family Friday. We celebrated the unique role families play in their children's learning and development.



Georgetown County First Steps 2015-2016 Partnership Board

Name	Position	Board Category
Patricia Canada, Chair	GCS D ADEPT Coordinator	School District Representative
Pamela Bradley, Vice Chair	Sales, Kaplan Co.	Business community
Whitney Martin, Secretary	Early Childhood Teacher	Childcare and early childhood development/education provider
Tiffany Jenkins, Treasurer	DHEC	DHEC Representative
Dwight McInvaill	Georgetown County Library Director	Library Representative
Jane Wishart	Retired Kindergarten Teacher/ Housing Authority Consultant	Pre-kindergarten through primary educator
Carolyn Ellis	Vice President of the Cliff and Carolyn Ellis Foundation	Non-profit organization that provides services to families and children
Ayesha Smith	Child Find Preschool Transition Specialist	Family education , training, and support provider
Anita Floyd	Attorney	Business community
Gwendolyn McNeil	Andrews Magistrate	Faith community
Lakisha Holmes Myers	Early Childhood Paraprofessional	Early Childhood Education
Celia Sargent	S & L Services	Transportation provider
Renee Bodie Goldfinch	Parent/ Legal Assistant	Parent of a preschooler
Bernard "Garvey" Winans	Family Justice Center	Appointee
Elizabeth Krauss	Georgetown County Board of Disabilities and Special Needs	Appointee
Merit Justice	GCS D Gifted and Talented Teacher	Appointee
Sylvia Mitchum	DSS	DSS Representative

Georgetown County First Steps 2015-2016 Staff

Carol Daly, Executive Director

Linda Poplin, Administrative Assistant

Jazmin Noriega, Bilingual Program Educator

Jane Wishart, Early Childhood Consultant



GCFS Office Staff

Georgetown County 2015-2016 Local Legislature

State Senator: Raymond E. Cleary, III

State Representatives: Carl L. Anderson and Stephen L. Goldfinch, Jr.



GCFS Board Members at the 2015 Annual Meeting

Getting children ready for school.

The Goals of First Steps

- (1) Provide parents with access to the support they might seek and want** to strengthen their families and to promote the optimal development of their preschool children;
- (2) Increase comprehensive services** so children have reduced risk for major physical, developmental, and learning problems;
- (3) Promote high-quality preschool programs** that provide a healthy environment that will promote normal growth and development;
- (4) Provide services** so all children receive the protection, nutrition, and health care needed to thrive in the early years of life so they arrive at school ready to succeed; and
- (5) Mobilize communities** to focus efforts on providing enhanced services to support families and their young children so as to enable every child to reach school healthy and ready to succeed.

-- Section 59-152-30



BabyNet

South Carolina's Early Intervention System

BabyNet in Georgetown County:

Main Line: (843) 839-5045

<http://scfirststeps.org/babynet/>

Georgetown Country First Steps also provides free developmental screenings for children ages birth through 3.

What are the benefits of screenings?

- Screenings can assist your child to be ready for school
- Screenings provide information to support your child's development.
- The screening will include the following areas of development: Communication, Gross Motor, Fine Motor, Problem Solving, and Personal-Social using the Ages & Stages Questionnaires®, Third Edition (ASQ-3™)

To schedule a free screening, please call us at (843) 520-1830



Interested parents can contact any participating 4K providers to complete an application. To view a list of participating First Steps 4K providers, visit <http://scfirststeps.org/4k>.

Save the Date!

Our Annual Meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 11, 2016 at 5:30PM at Eddy Chacon's Restaurant of Georgetown.

An RSVP is required; please contact Linda Poplin by October 5th at (843) 520-1830 or lindpo22@yahoo.com.

Support Georgetown First Steps today through a tax-deductible donation, or volunteer!

Thank you to our Supporters!

In-Kind Support

- Georgetown Housing Authority
- WellCare, Inc.
- First Book
- Georgetown County First Steps Partnership Board
- Georgetown County School District
- Jane Wishart
- Palmetto Ace Home Center
- Fred and Linda Poplin
- Lunda Greene
- Kaplan Early Learning Company



Funding Support

- State of South Carolina
- Precious Blood of Christ Catholic Woman's Club
- International Paper Foundation
- Cliff Ellis Foundation
- Palmetto Ace Home Center
- Low Country Giving Day
- Saluda County First Steps
- Dwight McInvaill
- Gwendolyn R. McNeil
- Anita Floyd
- Mark and Deborah Robertson
- Stephen Kresovich and Janice E. Kilburn
- Jane Wishart
- Cornerstone Support Services
- Elizabeth R. Marlow
- Robert and Carolyn Ellis
- Amanda Cassey
- Jill Corbin
- Laura Woods
- Greg Berger
- Linda Long
- Liz Funderburk
- Debbie Tucker
- Mary James Galligan
- Patricia Galligan
- Pamela Bradley
- SafeRack Manufacturing and Technology Center LLC
- Trebol USA, LLC
- Deborah Jones, Southco Acceptance Corporation
- Nancy J. Bracken



A **SPECIAL THANK YOU** to the Pawleys Island Palmetto Ace Home Center for supporting the young children of Georgetown County. Palmetto Ace Home Center held two fundraisers to benefit GC First Steps.