

YORK COUNTY



Getting children ready for school.



Nurse–Family Partnership

Parents as Teachers

Countdown to Kindergarten

**Child Care Quality
Enhancement**

Child Care Training

Child Care Scholarships

Annual Report

2016-17



OUR VISION:

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



By The Numbers

Indicator	SC	York County
Children Under Five	293,134	15,991
Children In Poverty	24.4%	17.1%
3 rd Graders Scoring "Does Not Meet" Standard in Reading	22.2%	York 1: 31.5% York 2: 9.5% York 3: 24.6% York 4: 7.2%
Births to Mothers With Less Than a High School Diploma	15.0%	12.0%

KIDS COUNT data provided by



- Since inception, York County First Steps has leveraged **\$4,841,383** from sources outside state government. **That's \$.66 for every dollar received.**
- **908 hours of support and guidance** were provided to 54 families in our Parents as Teachers Program.
- **Childcare professionals received 102 hours** of certified training for early care best practices including our Annual Early Childhood Conference where 200 Childcare Professionals attended.
- **Provided 133 rising kindergarten children** with Countdown to Kindergarten providing 780 home and school visits.
- **Served 31 at risk first time mothers** through our Nurse-Family Partnership Program.

York County First Steps

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Board Chair

Cindy Hunt

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www.YCFirstSteps.com

Critical Need for Early Interventions

James Heckman, recipient of the 2000 Nobel Prize for Economics, has focused his skills and attention on the need for early childhood interventions. In his book, Giving Kids a Fair Chance, he begins with the following observations, "The accident of birth is a principal source of inequality in America today...The powerful impact of birth on life chances is bad for individuals born into disadvantage. And it is bad for American society." He continues to make his case that high quality programs and positive parental experiences make the most sustainable investments in our collective future.

York County First Steps strives to be on the front line of the efforts to help at risk children receive high quality interventions. We target our interventions to reach families as early as possible to help mitigate the potential disadvantages of birth circumstances. A common misperception is that systemic poverty is self-inflicted and impossible to break. Each year we can see the evidence that this is untrue. High quality programs that engage both child and parent can transform lives. Hopelessness and feeling overwhelmed can be turned into opportunities and brighter futures not only for the immediate family but also for the child's future success. We thank our many community partners for their efforts with us to serve York County. We welcome you to review our Annual Report and learn about our Program achievements this past year. We also commit to renewing our passion to serve for the upcoming year.

David W. Lisk, Sr.
 Executive Director



Healthy Start



Family Strengthening



Early Intervention



Quality Child Care



Early Education



School Transition

County Programs

- Nurse-Family Partnership
- Parents as Teachers
- Child Care Training
- Quality Enhancement
- Countdown to Kindergarten
- Childcare Vouchers

State Programs

- Early Head Start
- First Steps 4k
- BabyNet



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 Head Start expands quality early learning and family support to infants and toddlers.



Early Intervention

Children’s school readiness depends on their healthy growth and development. First Steps helps identify potential delays early through developmental screenings and referring children to BabyNet and other early intervention 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 are ultimately preparing children for school success.

Based on the needs of our community, York County First focuses its investments in all six categories working to build a solid foundation for our children to succeed when they enter school.

Helping vulnerable first-time mothers empowers them to achieve a better life for themselves and their children.

Program Description

Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) helps transform the lives of vulnerable first-time mothers and their babies. Through ongoing home visits from registered nurses, low-income, first-time moms receive the care and support they need to have a healthy pregnancy, provide responsible and competent care for their children, and become more economically self-sufficient. From pregnancy until the child turns two years old, Nurse-Family Partnership Nurse Home Visitors form a much-needed, trusting relationship with the first-time moms, instilling confidence and empowering them to achieve a better life for their children – and themselves.

In York County, Nurse-Family Partnership is implemented through **York County First Steps**.



York County First Steps serves families in greatest need. Among our NFP families:

- 100% ... live in poverty
- 100% ... have multiple risk factors
- 20% ... were still in high school

NFP by the Numbers, 2016-17

Children Served	12
Number of Home Visits	199

“In the beginning, I was pretty scared about being a mother. When my nurse came for our visits, I began to feel more comfortable and a little less scared. I just want to help my daughter grow up better than me, and with my nurse’s support, I think I can do that.” - NFP Client Mother

This year, our NFP program:

- ✓ Our NFP Program serves Chester, Lancaster, and York Counties and began enrolling first time mothers in September 2016. We reached over 60% of our initial capacity by year-end.
- ✓ 100% of our first time mothers sought and received prenatal care prior to their delivery dates.
- ✓ 100% of our births, limited number this early in the program launch, have been born to term, 37 weeks or more and at a healthy birth weight, 2500 grams or greater. (Both are known risk factors for the child’s future success rate in school)

Thank you to our partners!

The United Way of York County
Women’s Enrichment Center
York County DHEC
Palmetto Pregnancy

York County First Steps

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

Program Description

Parents as Teachers (PAT) is an evidence-based home visiting program designed to build strong communities, thriving families and children who are healthy, safe and ready to succeed. PAT services include:

1. **Personal Visits** at least twice monthly
2. **Monthly Group Connections** with other PAT families
3. **Screenings and Assessments** to identify developmental concerns
4. **Connections to Outside Resources** that families may need to succeed

York County First Steps serves families in greatest need. Among our PAT families:

94% ... live in poverty

65% ... didn't graduate from high school

44% ... were in single parent household



I was really struggling with how to help my son learn what he needed for school. We look forward to our visit from the Parent Educator. He seems so excited to learn new things.

Marcia – PAT Parent

PAT by the Numbers 2016-17

Families Served	54	
Children Served	54	
Total Home Visits	871	
Hours Spent Serving Families	1064	
Average gain, <i>Keys to Interactive Parenting Scale</i> (pre-to-post):	KIPS Ave. Gain- 0.35	ACIRI Ave. Gain- A: 0.18

This year, our Parents as Teachers program:

- ✓ Averaged 16 home visits per family and providing an average of 1.04 hours per visit to help parents become better-equipped parents.
- ✓ Identified and addressed two potential developmental delays and made 158 total connections for families to services such as Teenage Vouchers, Department of Social Services, Medical Clinics, and Counseling Services.
- ✓ Improved parenting practices by assisting parents in developing positive bonding and learning experiences with their child and developing their parenting skills to be active participants in their child's educational journey.
- ✓ Improved literacy skills through our community collaborations with the four School Districts, the Rock Hill Rotary Club, Cheer for the Children, and The Early Learning Partnership (Born to Read, Reach Out and Read, and Dolly Parton Imagination Library) to distribute over 30,000 books within the community.

Thank you to our PAT Partners!

York School District #1

Clover School District #2

Rock Hill School District #3

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Child Care Quality Enhancement

In order to thrive, children need nurturing, responsive relationships and a supportive learning environment, both within and outside the home.

Program Description

The quality of care they received by young children is crucial to their healthy development and school readiness. Child care providers strive to provide high quality care, but may lack the resources that are commonly available to publicly-funded early childhood programs, such as educational materials, on-site professional development, and other support.

First Steps' Child Care Quality Enhancement (QE) is intended to produce measurable improvements in the quality of care provided to young children. Participating child care providers must serve a high percentage of at-risk children, and are selected through a competitive process that requires a strong level of commitment to the QE process.

Program Components

1. On-site Technical Assistance (TA) at least twice monthly
2. Equipment and materials funding
3. Integration with locally available training, provided by First Steps and other partners
4. Workforce Development
5. Coordination with community partners
6. Pre/post assessments of the classroom environment and teacher-child interaction, using nationally-recognized observational tools for infant/toddler and preschool settings (ITERS, ECERS, FCCERS)

QE by the Numbers, 2016-17

Child Care Providers Served	4
Number of TA Visits Provided	79
Number of Children 0-5 Enrolled in Provider Classrooms	142



High Quality Training is a constant need to meet the needs of our children!

This year, our Quality Enhancement program:

- ✓ Provided 174 hours of technical assistance to child care providers
- ✓ Provided \$1250 in materials grants to participating child care providers
- ✓ Funded scholarships for 9 children within participating child care providers
- ✓ York County First Steps is looking to launch Quality Counts in the future to provide further technical assistance to the childcare providers in our community.

Thank you to our partners!

- God's Blessing Child Care Center
- Kaplan Early Learning Company
- York County Network of Childcare Providers

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Child Care Training

Those who care for young children need high-quality, accessible, and affordable professional development.

Program Description

High-quality child care hinges on high-quality professional development that meets the needs of the local child care workforce.

First Steps-sponsored training is certified through the SC Center for Child Care Career Development and includes topics in the areas of nutrition, health and safety, curriculum, child guidance, professional development and program administration. Best practices in training include not only the training itself, but follow-up in the classroom.

Certified Child Care Training Sponsored by York County First Steps, 2016-17

Topic:
 Creating in the Early Childhood Classroom -5 Hours (2 Sessions)
 Boys and Girls Learn Differently – 5 Hours
 The Power of Reflection – 2 Hours

From our Early Childhood Conference:

- Healthy Snacks and Meals – Johnson & Wales
- Racial Bias – Cleo Scott Brown
- Engaging Preschool Children in Science – York County

Training by the Numbers, 2016-17

Total Training Attendance	406
Child Care Teachers and Directors Served	333
Number of Training Sessions Offered	16

I will use the ideas I've learned to keep our parents coming back. Always keep up with the community's needs.
 From the Healthy snack, I would love to try healthier eating + try the hands on approach with my kids

Two Conference Attendees



Education and learning can be fun...not only for children but also for adults!

This year, our Training program provided:

- ✓ 333 unduplicated early childhood professionals received high quality training tailored to their needs
- ✓ 102 hours of certified training were offered for childcare professionals to meet annual re-certification requirements
- ✓ We developed a dual track for interested early childcare professionals at our Annual Early Childhood Conference. One track, as before, providing certified training to meet yearly re-certification needs for developing classroom skills, and a second track for early childhood professionals interested in digging a bit deeper into topics, such as Racial Biases, Poverty, Literacy Development, Adverse Childhood Events, etc. and the impact on childhood development.

Thank you to our partners!

- Dutchman Creek Middle School
- Winthrop University and York Technical College
- Kaplan Early Learning Company
- Children's Museum of York County
- Johnson and Wales

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Child Care Scholarships

Too many families in York County cannot afford quality care for their children.

Program Description

Access to quality child care is essential for children while away from their primary caregivers. Yet, of those families income-eligible for child care assistance in South Carolina, only a small fraction receive it due to lack of funds. In the absence of nurturing and consistently available family, friends or neighbors, parents are faced with few - or no - affordable care options.

York County First Steps serves families in greatest need. Among our scholarship families:

- 100% ... live in poverty
- 100% ... didn't graduate from high school
- 100% ... were teen parents
- 100% ... either graduated from high school or were retained in the program

In addition to regular monitoring of child care providers that receive First Steps scholarships, First Steps conducts at least one developmental screening each year with scholarship children and connects families to needed services within the community.

All of our Teenage Mothers that received childcare vouchers also received the Parents as Teachers Program through their respective school districts. As we bring on our Nurse-Family Partnership Program, we can engage with these teens even earlier.

Without my childcare voucher, I would never have been able to finish high school. I am now working to save some money to go to York Tech.

Morgan – Teen Parent



Positive Parenting Bonding is a key for every child to grow up healthy and nurtured.

Scholarships by the Numbers, 2016-17

Children Served	9
Providers Served	4

This year, our Scholarship program:

- ✓ Provided 9 children with scholarship assistance so their teen mother could attend school
- ✓ All nine teen parents were served with Parents as Teachers during this time and were referred to other community services as needed such as Nurse Family Partnership, Department of Social Services, and Medical Clinics.
- ✓ Supported four small businesses in York County by subsidizing childcare tuition for families who would not otherwise be able to afford quality care. In each case, the Childcare Center provided a discount on tuition to collaborate in our efforts.

Thank you to our partners!

- York, Clover, Rock Hill, and Fort Mill School Districts
- Affinity and North Central Medical Clinics
- York County Childcare Provider Network

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Bringing parents and teachers together as partners sets the foundation for success in school.

Program Description

Countdown to Kindergarten (CTK) is a summer home visitation model connecting rising kindergartners and their families with their future teachers. The program is designed:

- ✓ to forge strong and lasting home-school relationships,
- ✓ to acquaint children and families with the state and classroom expectations to increase the likelihood of school success,
- ✓ to increase parent involvement in the early grades (particularly in hard-to-reach communities), when children's learning is foundational for life success; and
- ✓ to increase public awareness of the importance of school readiness and provide ways for parents and communities to impact children's early school success.

Countdown to Kindergarten integrates all of the following:

Home Visitation. Teachers make six visits over the summer to the homes of participating students and families. Children and families are introduced to actual materials used in kindergarten and are given a Kindergarten Transition Toolkit to keep.

Learning Celebration. The last visit is a "field trip" to the school where the child will attend class in the fall.

Public Awareness. Throughout the summer, First Steps releases tips to media to help parents and caregivers get children ready for kindergarten.

*CTK by the Numbers, Summer 2016

Children Served	133
Families Served	130
Home/School Visits	587

**CTK program data is for June-August 2016, whereas CTK fiscal data includes expenditures from July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017.*



My child is very, very shy. This has helped her a lot. She now knows there is a person he can trust and communicate with.

The Ortiz's

This year, our Countdown to Kindergarten program:

- ✓ Based on Pre and Post Parent Surveys, there was a 35.7% increase in children that were very excited about starting Kindergarten.
- ✓ Increased the amount of time parents spent reading to children by 11.5% in the three or more times per week frequency. This accompanied a 37.7% decrease in parents reading two or less times per week with their child.
- ✓ Based on Pre and Post Parent Surveys, there was a 163% increase in families having a very detailed understanding of the expectations for their child when they enter kindergarten.

Thank you to our partners!

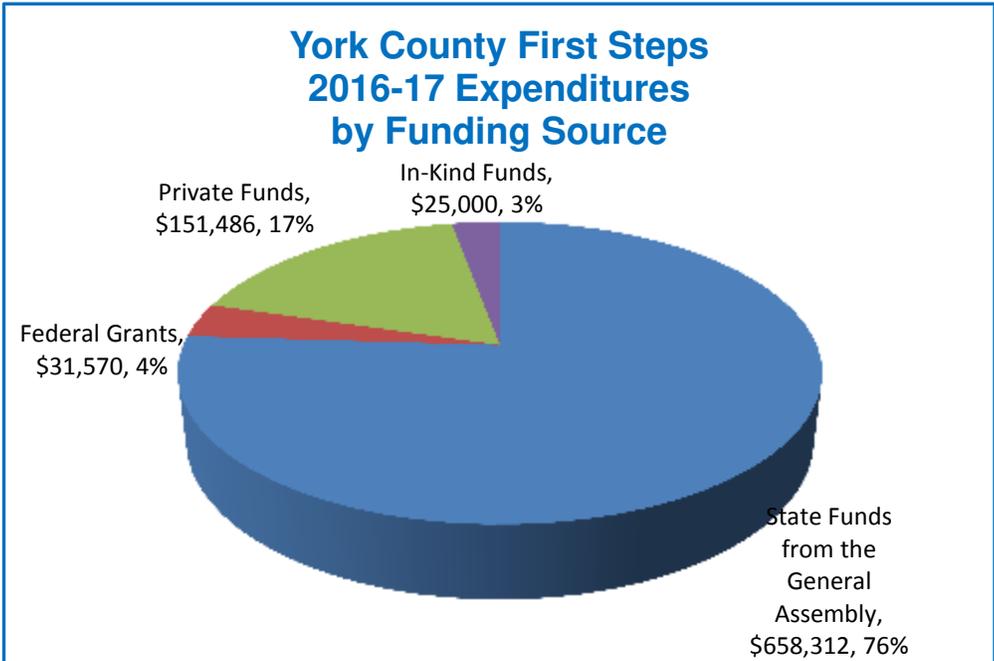
The Children's Museum
York, Clover, Rock Hill, and Fort Mill School Districts
Cheer for Children
York County First Steps Board and Staff Members

Like us on Facebook!
Countdown to Kindergarten-South Carolina



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Total 2016-17 Expenditures: \$866,368

State Funds Leveraged in 2016-17*: 32%

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

2016-17 Expenditures by Strategy

	State \$	Federal \$	Private \$	In-Kind \$	Total \$	% of 2016-17 Expenditures
Parents as Teachers	\$121,935	\$0	\$729	\$25,000	\$147,664	17%
Nurse-Family Partnership	\$214,413	\$0	\$108,608	\$0	\$323,021	37%
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$20,056	\$0	\$27,005	\$0	\$47,061	5%
Child Care Quality Enhancement	\$65,446	\$0	\$1,944	\$0	\$67,390	8%
Child Care Training	\$13,973	\$0	\$6,413	\$0	\$20,386	2%
Child Care Scholarships	\$29,720	\$0	\$4,760	\$0	\$34,480	4%
Early HeadStart	\$0	\$31,570	\$0	\$0	\$31,570	4%
Program Support	\$131,276	\$0	\$527	\$0	\$131,803	15%
Administrative Support	\$61,493	\$0	\$1,500	\$0	\$62,993	7%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$658,312	\$31,570	\$151,486	\$25,000	\$866,368	

Unaudited numbers for the period July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017

Since inception, York County First Steps has leveraged \$4,841,383 from sources outside of state government. That's 66 cents for every state dollar.

Thank you supporters!

Through partnerships and collaborations, as well as financial support from grants and contributions, XYZ First Steps leverages state dollars to enhance and expand services to children and families.

Funding Support

State of South Carolina: \$658,612
(through South Carolina First Steps)

United Way of York County: \$31,000

Sisters of Mercy NC Foundation: \$75,000

York County First Steps Board Members

In-Kind Support

York, Clover, Rock Hill, and Fort Mill
School Districts

Culture and Heritage Museum of York County

York School District Middle School

Rawlinson Road Middle School - RH



**With your help, we
can transform lives
in York County!
Join the Team.**

How your support helps children in York County:

- ✓ \$325 provides a rising kindergarten child with the Countdown to Kindergarten Program for the summer
- ✓ \$10 feeds dinner to low-income families attending a parenting workshop
- ✓ \$500 helps a teenage mother stay in high school with a quality child care voucher for one month
- ✓ \$350 can provide a community or faith based organization with age appropriate books for a literacy program for families with limited access to books

HOW TO GIVE: Check out our website: www.YCFirstSteps.com

Save the Date!

- YCFS Annual Meeting and Holiday Gathering – Monday December 11, 2017, 6:00 pm- 7:30 pm
- Early Childhood Conference – Saturday March 24, 2017, 8:00 am- 2:30 pm at Dutchman Creek Middle School
- Countdown to Kindergarten Celebration – Thursday, August 2, 2018, 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm, Rock Hill, SC

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

Nurse-Family Partnership Program Launched

3rd Times a Charm

York County First Steps has been interested in introducing Nurse-Family Partnership to our community since 2008. After two previous attempts, our 3rd effort was the charm.



Critical Need for Services to At Risk First Time Mothers

Since 2009, York County First Steps has been interested in bringing Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) to our Community. As we look for interventions that can make a sustainable long lasting impact, NFP always offered several positive elements toward achieving our vision and goals.

1. The intervention begins at the earliest point in a child's life – prenatally.
2. The Program targets both the child and their ultimate support system – their mother.
3. The Program offers long term home visitation assistance, 2+ years and moves the family on the path to self-sufficiency – less need for outside assistance

Nurse-Family Partnership can make a lasting impact on a family that allows a child to reach their life's potential.

Obstacles and Challenge

During the last several years potential obstacles and challenges have come in the form of determining a suitable Implementing Agency to hire the nurses to deliver the Nurse-Family Partnership Program with fidelity and to secure the needed funds to launch such a Program. We were eventually successful in building sufficient internal capacity to be approved as the Implementing Agency and securing sufficient funding to launch a small team at the end of 2016.



Progress to Date

Within the first year of our NFP Program we have reached capacity of serving 50 first time at risk mothers and their new born children and have started securing additional funds to add capacity. We have been successful in developing collaborative partnerships, especially in York and Lancaster County to secure a robust referral and support network of partners to fuel our capacity increase. In our hiring of nurses, we have been very blessed to hire nurses with impeccable credentials and a passion to serve our target clients. It is their passion to serve and develop our needed relationships within the community that has been our most critical component for success.

Support York County First Steps today through a tax-deductible donation, or volunteer.



First Steps Partnership Board

YCFS Convenes the Childcare Professionals each year for an Early Childhood Conference

We have offered a secondary track of learning opportunities for childcare professionals and advocates

This past year, we were able to secure several new partners to join our Early Childhood Conference. Nutrition has long been a hot topic issue for young children and we were able to collaborate with Johnson & Wales Culinary School to offer two 2-hour sessions for Childcare Provider Directors and Kitchen workers to incorporate healthy meal and snack elements into every meal at their center. In their session, making the snacks not only tasty but also appealing to young children was a critical element, along with the cost to provide. As an added bonus, the instructors offered suggestions on how to involve the children in the food preparation to establish their own relationship with their eating choices and the impact on their health. Another important offering to the Childcare Professionals was to introduce the topic of hidden racial biases that we all carry into our jobs and relationships. By realizing the subtle decisions we make based on our biases, we can begin to break down their effect. This can be critically important for working with at risk children as they are most likely to be “labeled” and placed into remedial classrooms settings. We plan to offer more workshops along these topic lines to provide childcare professionals and others interested in early childhood, opportunities to learn more about the latest trends in thinking as it relates to early childhood interventions.

York County First Steps Partnership Board, 2016-17

Name	Position	Board Category
Cindy Hunt, Chair	ParentSmart Family Resource Center	Appointee – Rock Hill SD #3
Carol Mann, Vice Chair	Retired School Teacher	Appointee - Legislative
Deborah Dukes, Secretary	York Technical College Professor	Family Education
Vivian Agurs	Smart Kids CDC	Faith Community
Joyce Argo	Teacher at Clinton Elementary School	Pre-K – Primary School
Mary Chamberlain	Winthrop Makefast CDC	Early Childhood Education
Nina Feemster	Bright Beginnings Family Resource Center	Appointee – Clover SD #2
Susan Collier	DHEC	Appointee - DHEC
Carol Perkins	PITC	Early Education
Jane Culp	LEAP Ahead Family Resource Center	Appointee - Fort Mill SD #4
Joy Bower	Rock Hill School District	Medical
Penny Sanders	Parenting Partners Family Resource Center	Appointee – York SD #1
Mary Watson	Winthrop MacFeat CDC	Pre-K Primary School
Diane Williams	York County Library	Appointee – York County Library
Beth Cooper	Culture and Heritage Museum – Children’s Museum	Nonprofit
Patricia Samuel	HeadStart Director	Appointee - HeadStart
Dr. Winslow Shock	Chiropractor	Business
Tenisha Powell	Winthrop University	Early Childhood Education



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



Interested parents with Medicaid-eligible children who live in eligible school districts can contact any participating provider to complete an application for free, full-day 4K. To view a list of participating First Steps 4K providers, visit:

<http://scfirststeps.org/4k>



EARLY HEAD START – CHILD CARE PARTNERSHIP

Low income families with children 0-36 months, and families with infants or toddlers with special needs, are invited to apply for this year-round, comprehensive program. Available in the following counties: Allendale, Anderson, Bamberg, Berkeley, Dillon, Georgetown, Laurens, Lexington, Newberry, Orangeburg, Saluda and York, and coming soon to Fairfield and McCormick counties. To apply, visit:

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



[I CAN] is First Steps' public awareness campaign for school readiness, in support of the state's Profile of the Ready Kindergartener. Includes resources for parents, providers and communities to learn what they can do to support school readiness.

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