

CHESTER COUNTY



Getting children ready for school.



Parents as Teachers

Child Care Training

# Annual Report

2017-18



**OUR VISION:**

Every South Carolina child  
will be prepared for  
success in school.

# Board Chair Message

## Chairman's Message - Advancing Good Beginnings in Children

When looking at the importance of the work of First Steps, standing firm is creating and sustaining an infrastructure for dynamic early childhood outcomes. The infrastructure of stakeholders is comprised of parents, families businesses, faith community, the childcare work force, schools and local communities throughout the county. Children are at home nearly 75% of the time, a fact that cannot be ignored. We cannot ignore it because their learning begins at home. And, if the parents or the adults who care for our children are not using early care best practices, struggling to learn or failing to thrive educationally looms ahead. Close engagement with childcare professionals has benefitted the workers and the children in their care. Increasing knowledge of the classroom teachers has resulted in children being in welcoming safe places where practices for stimulating thinking skills flourish.

Investing in our children is a win for them and for us. We want intelligent, capable adults to take over the reins of being leaders, skilled professionals and good parents in the not so distant future. Our return on investments now will pay off with sustaining the community and influence marketability traits for attracting companies seeking new areas to locate. Putting our children on a track for life-long learning not only sounds good, but it is good for business and all of us.

**Oresa Roddey**  
**Board Chair**

## OUR MISSION:

**Collaborating with other entities, First Steps helps South Carolina families and caregivers prepare their children for school success by maximizing public and private community resources to deliver, enhance and expand high-quality early childhood services.**





**Find Chester First Steps:**





## THE NEED

School readiness **depends on the capacity of caregivers** to provide children with consistent, nurturing, and responsive relationships in safe, stimulating learning environments, **continuously**, starting at birth. Unfortunately, these quality early childhood experiences happen for too few children in Chester County.

How are Chester County's children doing?	What early learning programs are available for children in our county? Last year:	Where can families access child care in our county?
<b>1882</b> are under age 5	<b>0</b> attended Early Head Start as infants and toddlers	<b>6</b> licensed child care centers
<b>31%</b> live in poverty	<b>87</b> attended free preschool or Head Start as 3-year-olds	<b>1</b> licensed group/family homes
<b>15.8%</b> of babies born in 2016 were to moms without a HS diploma	<b>259</b> 4-year-olds attended free full-day public school 4K or Head Start	<b>9%</b> participate in the state's Quality Rating System (ABC Quality)
<b>18%</b> Unemployed parents	<b>95</b> 0-5 year olds received early intervention or special ed.	<b>2</b> providers are rated B or higher by <b>ABC Quality</b>
<b>37%</b> of last year's kindergartners demonstrated readiness	<b>11</b> were served by 	<b>105</b> families received assistance with affording child care last year
<i>Kids Count data provided by:</i> 	<i>Data provided by:</i> 	

## THE GOALS

Our partnership's work, in collaboration with state and local partners, is focused on advancing Chester County towards these strategic goals in support of the **Profile of the Ready Kindergartner**, South Carolina's description of school readiness:

1. Raise funds to support Chester County First Steps programs and/or activities.
2. Increase community collaboration and participation in First Steps programs and services.
3. Explore options for Chester County First Steps employees' benefits/retirement package.
4. Recruiting board members for continuing to cultivate a strong, active board culture.
5. Community Collaboration, focus guided by an Action Plan.
6. Explore expanding parenting program with holistic approach to helping parents enhance skills.

## THE IMPACT

In 2017-18, Chester County First Steps provided:

- ✓ **41 Children** and **39 adults** with **intensive support** to equip parents and caregivers with the confidence and competence to be a child's first and best teacher, and strengthen their family's health, economic, and overall well-being. (Parents As Teachers strategy)
- ✓ **14 staff** working in **4** child care providers, Head Start centers and preschool classrooms with training, technical assistance, resources and support, **helping them better meet the needs of 327 children ages 0-5 in their care.** (Child Care Training & Professional Development strategy)
- ✓ **1195 books** to **spark the love of reading** for **366 children** (Parents As Teachers and Child Care Training & Professional Development strategies)
- ✓ a total of **366 children** and **80 adults** were impacted by Chester County First Steps programs, resources, activities and events.



# School Readiness Outcomes

## What is the KRA?

In 2017-18, kindergartners across the state were given for the first time South Carolina’s newest assessment of school readiness: the **Kindergarten Readiness Assessment**, or KRA. The KRA provides a snapshot of students’ abilities at the beginning of the school year, in four domains: Social Foundations, Language and Literacy, Mathematics, and Physical Development and Well-Being. Here are the results locally and for the state:

1. **Language and Literacy:** reading, writing, speaking, and listening
2. **Mathematics:** counting, comparison, and sorting
3. **Physical Well-Being & Motor Development:** dexterity, muscular coordination, and balance
4. **Social Foundations:** following rules, asking for help, task persistence and other skills necessary to function within the kindergarten classroom

CHESTER COUNTY DISTRICT (373 children)			
Domain	Emerging	Approaching	Demonstrating
Social Foundations	29%	21%	49%
Language&Literacy	23%	45%	32%
Mathematics	31%	41%	29%
Physical Dev&WB	32%	20%	48%
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>37%</b>

SOUTH CAROLINA (54,927 children)			
Domain	Emerging	Approaching	Demonstrating
Social Foundations	28%	27%	45%
Language&Literacy	23%	43%	34%
Mathematics	31%	38%	31%
Physical Dev&WB	28%	24%	48%
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>36%</b>

**Demonstrating Readiness:** student demonstrates foundational skills and behaviors that prepare him/her for instruction based on kindergarten standards.

**Approaching Readiness:** student demonstrates some foundational skills and behaviors that prepare him/her for instruction based on kindergarten standards

**Emerging Readiness:** student demonstrates limited foundational skills and behaviors that prepare him/her for instruction based on kindergarten standards

## Collaborating for Change

Improving kindergarten readiness is the same as giving attention to all the factors contributing to successful learning experiences. Environments for children should advance brain development, nurture social emotional growth, support activities and provide opportunities that advance critical thinking abilities.

The fact that children are affected by their surroundings is too obvious to bear repeating. Child development research shows that the environment of a child’s earliest years can have effects that last a lifetime. Families and childcare professionals are at the epicenter of affecting the formative stage of early childhood development. Kindergarten assessment results reveal an imperative for a collective effort to improved learning domains that measure the readiness level when children are at the threshold of lifelong learning.

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 (803) 385-6174  
 Email [firststepsc@truvista.net](mailto:firststepsc@truvista.net)

**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

**Chester First Steps serves families in greatest need. Among our PAT families:**

- 87% ... live in poverty
- 12% ... didn't graduate from high school
- 78% ... were teen parents

*“I enjoy the Group Connections. They give my family opportunities to interact with other families I may otherwise not even know.”*

**Dominique Mc.**



## PAT by the Numbers 2017-18

Families Served	36	
Children Served	41	
Total Home Visits	726	
Hours Spent Serving Families	766	
Average gain, <i>Keys to Interactive Parenting Scale</i> (pre-to-post):	2.56	3.44

## This year, our Parents as Teachers program:


- ✓ Averaged 20.17 home visits per family
- ✓ Identified and addressed 5 potential developmental delays, and made 1 connections for families to services such as BabyNet
- ✓ Improved literacy skills by incorporating a reading activity during every home visit, providing Dolly Parton Imagination Library application and distributing 409 books

## Thank you to our PAT partners!

- Lancaster County Fatherhood Program
- BabyNet
- Chester County DSS

**Evidence of Effectiveness:**

Parents as Teachers meets the First Steps legislation’s definition of an **evidence-based** program.



# 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.

*"We appreciate being able to come to quality trainings locally with great trainers. And the networking is great too!"*  
 Cathy H.

Training Sponsored by Chester First Steps, 2017-18	
Topic:	Sessions:
First Aid/CPR	Two Sessions
Making My Mark	One Session
Blood-Borne Pathogens	Two Session
Cradling Literacy	Five Sessions
Nutrition	Four Sessions



First Aid/CPR training participants and instructor, Juan Buchanan.

## Training by the Numbers, 2017-18

Total Training Attendance	144
Child Care Teachers and Directors Served	44
Number of Training Sessions Offered	19


**This year, our Training program provided:**

- ✓ 44 early childhood staff with high quality training, impacting 14 providers and 327 children
- ✓ 18 hours of certified training and 12 hours of registered training for staff to meet annual re-certification requirements
- ✓ 31 follow-up visits 20 with training participants to help put training into practice

## Thank you to our Training partners!

- Child Care Resource & Referral
- Chester County School District
- ABC Child Care

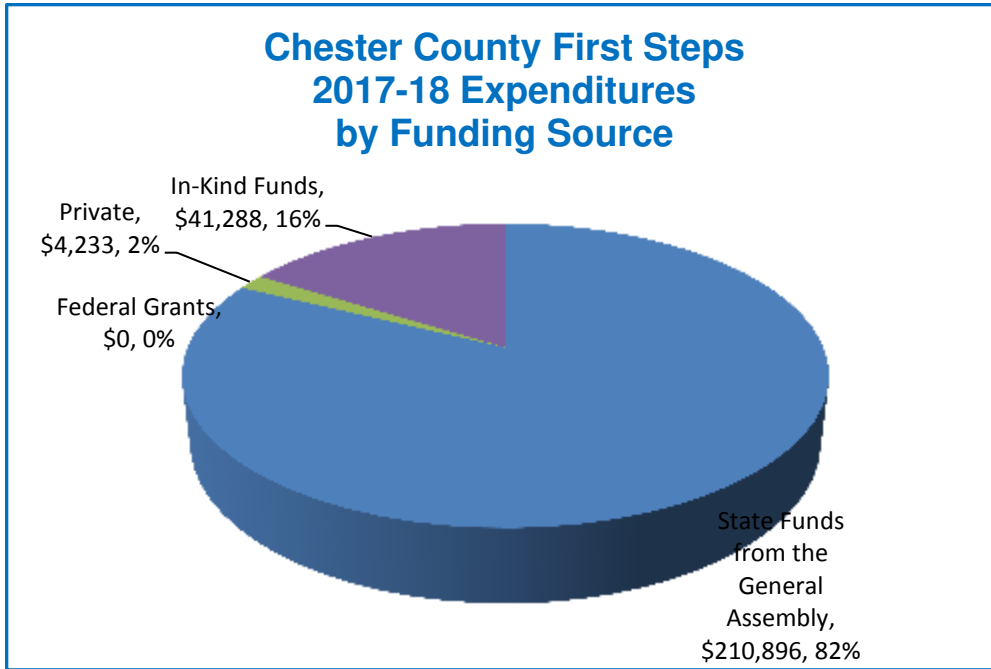
Evidence of Effectiveness:  
 Child Care Training and Professional Development meets the First Steps legislation's definition of an **evidence-based** program.





# Financial Impact

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



**Total 2017-18 Expenditures: \$256,418**

**State Funds Leveraged in 2017-18\*: 22%**

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

## 2017-18 Expenditures by Strategy

	State \$	Federal \$	Private \$	In-Kind \$	Total \$	% of 2017-18 Expenditures
Parents as Teachers	\$142,765	\$0	\$2,792	\$16,324	\$161,881	63%
Child Care Training	\$5,530	\$0	\$592	\$14,164	\$20,286	8%
Program Support	\$42,531	\$0	\$495	\$8,100	\$51,126	20%
Administrative Support	\$20,071	\$0	\$354	\$2,700	\$23,125	9%
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$210,897</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$4,233</b>	<b>\$41,288</b>	<b>\$256,418</b>	

Unaudited numbers for the period July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018

**Since inception, Chester County First Steps has leveraged \$4,561,882 from sources outside of state government. That's 42 cents for every state dollar.**

# Thank you supporters!

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

Support from local partners are important for advancing programs, activities, projects and services.

Chester County Government

Clemson Extension Service Chester YMCA



## How your support helps children in Chester County:

- ✓ Provides learning materials in early care classrooms!
- ✓ Professional development for teachers specializing in infant care.
- ✓ Provides materials and parenting support needed by new parents and teen mothers.
- ✓ Provides literacy materials for all preschool children enrolled in 4K classrooms.

HOW TO GIVE: Donations can be made at 109 Ella Street, Chester or mailed to Post Office Box 1728, Chester, SC 29706

## *Save the Date!*

**Chester County First Steps Annual Board Meeting - Tuesday, October 23, 2018 at 6:00 pm - Horizons Christian Academy 729 Villiage Drive, Chester, SC 29706**

**Chester County First Steps Chinese Auction (fundraising event) - Saturday, November 10, 2018, 10:00 am – 12:00 p.m. at Chester Branch YMCA 157 Columbia Street, Chester, SC 29706**

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



## Celebrating Week of the Young Child

This year in observation of The Week of the Young Child, the Chester First Steps Team solicited community volunteers from various agencies to assist in daily activities at local childcare centers. Each day, staff and volunteers visited a center to share books and activities centered around the theme of the day. Children along with staff and volunteers enjoyed Music Monday, Travel Tuesday, Workout Wednesday, and Artsy Thursday. Each child in the centers and classes received a book. Volunteers from DSS, DHEC, the Library, state government offices, and city officials unleashed their inner child for a time to read and play.





# What is First Steps?

**At the state level and in every county**, First Steps leverages state funding with other public and private resources to help South Carolina’s children enter kindergarten healthy and ready to succeed. First Steps programs and services support families as their child’s first and most important teacher and are customized to meet the unique needs of local communities, grounded in strong evidence, fueled by stakeholder collaboration, and accountable for results.

## First Steps Goals

- (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.

### First Steps Building Blocks of Quality Early Childhood Programs and Services



Healthy Start



Family Strengthening



Early Intervention



Quality Child Care



Early Education



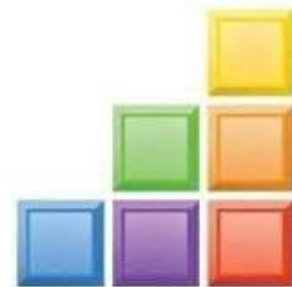
School Transition

From Greenville to Charleston, Abbeville to York, First Steps local partnerships serve as ...

**Local portals** connecting preschool children and families to services

**Conveners** of community stakeholders to address the needs of young children and their families

**Champions** of the importance of school readiness to our children’s future.



[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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