



2023-2024

ANNUAL REPORT



FIRST STEPS IS HERE

Last year, because of Kershaw County First Steps:



148 children

were directly served in Kershaw County



34 parents & caregivers

received services and support to be their child's first and most important teacher



25 educators

participated in First Steps training and professional development, benefitting 500+ children

PROVEN RESULTS

A 2019 study found that children who received First Steps local partnership services were:



74% more likely

to score at the highest level on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment



34% less likely

to be chronically absent in kindergarten

THE NEED PERSISTS IN KERSHAW COUNTY

First Steps works but we need to expand our reach to ensure that all children are ready.

4,098

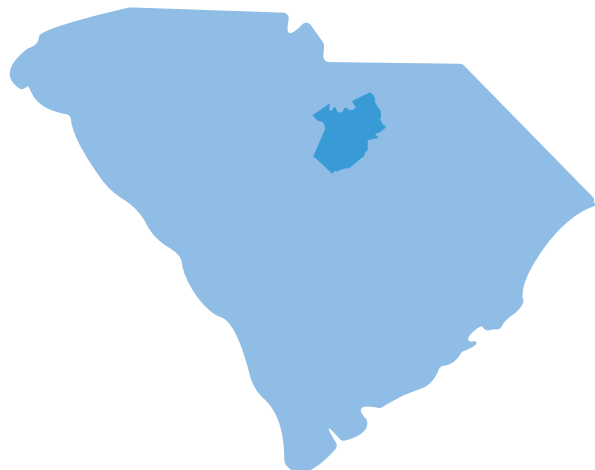
children under 6

38%

of young children live in poverty or low-income households

59%

of kindergarteners are considered "not ready" for school



OUR MISSION

Through community collaboration, KCFS will provide access to resources and support for families, enabling children to enter school ready to learn.



Stephen James

Interim Executive Director

This past year has been one of transformation and resilience for our organization. Navigating through uncertain times, we embraced change and took bold steps in restructuring our operations to better serve our mission. Our commitment to providing high-quality programs and services remained unwavering, even as we adapted to new challenges. Together, we emerged stronger, more focused, and better prepared to meet the needs of the parents, children, families, and providers we serve in Kershaw County. As we look to the future, we are filled with hope and determination, confident that our strategic adjustments will pave the way for continued success and growth.

Serving Kershaw County's children birth through age five.

"As a parent that has had a learning disability all my life, a disability is just a name. You can do anything you want in life just by having faith & prayer. The Parents as Teachers (PAT) program has taught me to keep on going. If I try one way and it doesn't work, then I need to go the other way. The hands-on experiences provided through the monthly group meetings or our individual one-on-one meetings, I was able to persevere. I've had help all my life and I will never turn down help"

Montana B.
Kershaw County First Steps parent



PROGRAMS

PARENTING

Parents as Teachers

Offers research-based curricula that help families raise children to be healthy, safe, learning, and ready for school.

15

children served

14

group meetings
and events

294

home visits

Raising a Reader - Enhanced

Helps families develop, practice, and maintain home literacy habits.

112

children served

13

group meetings

800

books distributed

EARLY CARE & EDUCATION

Quality Enhancement

Promotes quality in child care by providing early educators with one-on-one coaching and support.

139

children served

3

providers served

77

technical assistance
hours

SCHOOL TRANSITION

Countdown to Kindergarten

Supports transitions into kindergarten by connecting incoming students, their families, and their teachers in a series of one-on-one sessions during the summer.

8

children served

1

schools served

48

home visits

Countdown to 4K

Supports transitions into pre-kindergarten by connecting incoming students, their families, and their teachers in a series of one-on-one sessions during the summer.

13

children served

3

schools served

78

home visits

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

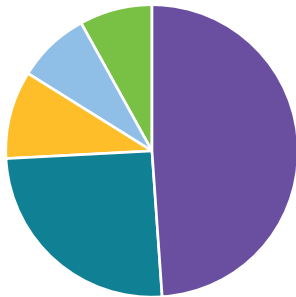


\$1 = \$1.34

Kershaw County First Steps leveraged \$71,595.28 from sources outside of state government, providing a match of \$0.34 for every state dollar invested.

EXPENDITURES

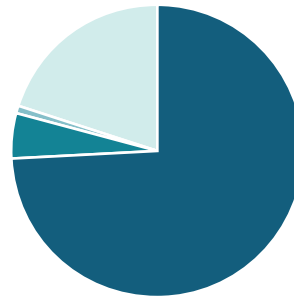
Total: \$289,154.51



- Parenting - \$141,989.11
- Early Care & Education - \$73,217.02
- School Transition - \$27,581.62
- Administrative - \$23,694.57
- Core Functions - \$22,672.19

FUNDING SOURCES

Total: \$279,270.81



- State Funding - \$207,675.53
- Federal Funding - \$13,514.46
- Private Funding - \$2,280.82
- In-kind Contributions - \$55,800

FUNDING SUPPORT BY SOUTH CAROLINA FIRST STEPS

State Education Improvement Act (EIA) Funding
 State READY Funding*
 Federal ESSER Funding**
 State Income Tax Check-off and Private Donations to SC First Steps

*Resources for Early Acceleration and Development in Youth (READY) Proviso 1.105

**American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund, awarded to the South Carolina Department of Education

Note: Revenue amounts may show a difference between allocations and revenue based on penalties imposed by the SC First Steps Board of Trustees for non-compliance with organizational policies. The figures provided are based on unaudited financial statements and, as such, are subject to change.



Jennifer Kelley

Board Chair

There are so many exciting things happening at the Kershaw County First Steps! New signage, a community lending library, and much more. The staff is enthusiastic about the mission of KCFS, building on past accomplishments and setting new goals to increase the impact to the community. I invite you to stop by and see what has been accomplished this past year, and learn about our vision for the future.

Our Local Supporters

Kershaw County Library
Kershaw County School District
Kershaw County Department of Health & Environmental Control (DHEC)
Kershaw County Department of Social Services (DSS)
Kershaw County Health Department
Kershaw County Parks & Recreation
Central Carolina Technical College
DataWorks, LLC
Total Tech, LLC
Ag First Farm Credit Bank
Absolute Total Care
Blue Pineapple Trophy's & Gifts
R&S Inflatables
Kershaw County Head Start
St. John's Childcare Ministry
Caughman Academy
Kids Life Learning Center

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