



# 2023-2024

## ANNUAL REPORT



# FIRST STEPS IS HERE

Last year, because of Horry County First Steps:



**708 children**

were directly served in Horry County



**304 parents & caregivers**

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



**109 educators**

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

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## 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

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## THE NEED PERSISTS IN HORRY COUNTY

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

**17,966**

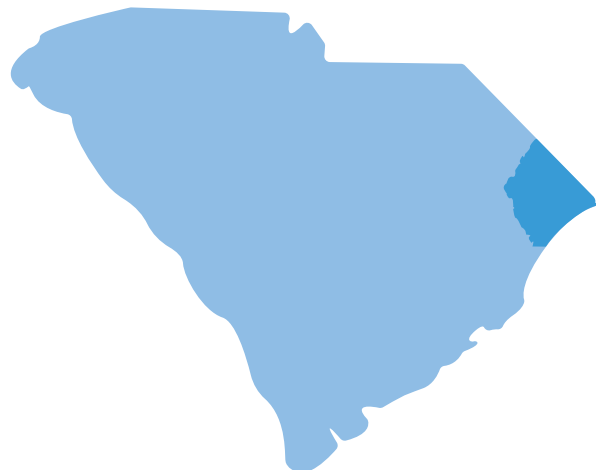
children aged 0-5

**44%**

of young children live in poverty or low-income households

**70%**

of kindergarteners are considered "not ready" for school



# OUR MISSION

Ensure that children start school ready to learn by supporting the caring adults who touch their lives. We establish partnerships and secure resources to provide programs that focus on quality early care and education, family support, health, and early literacy.



## Amy Breault

Executive Director

As we reflect on the accomplishments of 2024, we hope it was a good year for you.

As the Horry County First Steps team looks back on the highlights of 2024 and what we accomplished with your support for children and families across Horry County, the image of a bridge keeps coming up. Horry County First Steps is the bridge that connects community members to the resources and services they need to help children get ready for school. We connect Early Care and Education Professionals with the training and materials they need to implement Creative Curriculum. We are the bridge that families rely on to ensure their children are healthy and ready to learn by providing access to materials and referrals to a broad spectrum of services.

High-quality support services are the gateway to successful school entry. People like you, who want to make a difference in their communities, who want to give back, and who understand the power that school readiness has to transform lives, see Horry County First Steps as a bridge to those most in need of support.

The information that follows highlights some of the impactful connections that have been made because of your invaluable support. Your contributions have been instrumental in our achievements.

Thank you for joining us on this mission. We want to assure you of our unwavering commitment to our cause and look forward to building more bridges in 2025!



**Serving Horry County's children birth through age five.**

# PROGRAMS

## PARENTING

### Raising a Reader - Enhanced

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

131

children served

8,244

book distributed

## EARLY CARE & EDUCATION

### Training & Professional Development

Certified and registered training hours for the early childhood workforce.

536

children served

13

providers served

37

certified training hours

## SCHOOL TRANSITION

### 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.

8

children served

1

schools served

48

home visits

### Enhanced Early Education

Provides important support to students and their families through supplemental materials and book distributions to classrooms

150

children served

150

clients visits

## HEALTH

### Early Identification & Referral

Providing developmental screenings and referrals to other services.

72

children served

90

families served

# FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

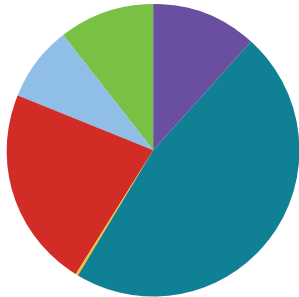


**\$1 = \$1.31**

Horry County First Steps leveraged \$681,539.79 from sources outside of state government, providing a match of \$0.31 for every state dollar invested.

## EXPENDITURES

Total: \$963,434.74



- Parenting - \$110,065.74
- Early Care & Education - \$431,844.7
- School Transition - \$1,888
- Health - \$206,022.54
- Administrative - \$77,760.80
- Core Functions - \$95,486.62

## FUNDING SOURCES

## FUNDING SUPPORT BY SOUTH CAROLINA FIRST STEPS

State Education Improvement Act (EIA) 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

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.

## **Our Local Supporter**

Horry Electric Trust, \$5,000.00

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