



2023-2024

ANNUAL REPORT



FIRST STEPS IS HERE

Last year, because of Clarendon County First Steps:



494 children

were directly served in Clarendon County



504 parents & caregivers

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



69 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 CLARENDON COUNTY

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

1,634

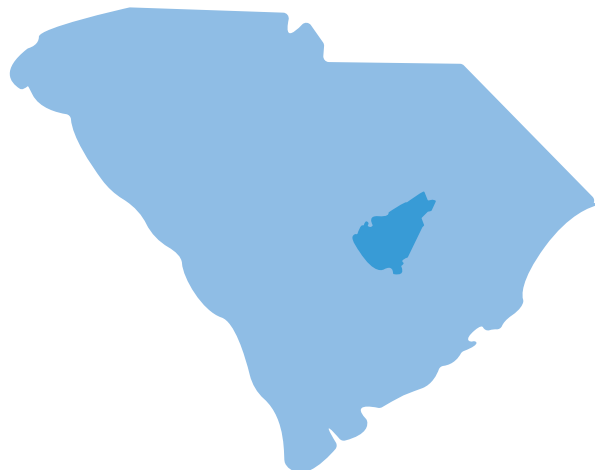
children under 6

52%

of young children live in poverty or low-income households

63%

of kindergarteners are considered "not ready" for school



OUR MISSION

To partner with organizations within and outside of Clarendon County to leverage and maximize resources to provide quality, research-based programs and services that will prepare Clarendon County's children for success in school and in life.



Sharon Williams

Executive Director

Dear Friends and Partners,

As we present this year's annual report for Clarendon County First Steps, I am reminded of a critical truth: research consistently shows that by the age of four, up to 90% of a child's brain potential is developed. This small but crucial window of opportunity underscores the importance of providing quality early care and education during these formative years. Our collective efforts in this regard are not just beneficial—they are essential.

This year, we have seen the profound impact of our work thanks to the unwavering support of our diverse and dedicated partners. Your commitment to ensuring that our pre-kindergarten children receive high-quality educational experiences has been instrumental in advancing our mission. Whether you have contributed by serving on our Partnership Board, implementing programs, providing funding, or connecting us to or providing other resources, your efforts are deeply appreciated. Every contribution you make helps us implement programs and services that adhere to best practices in school readiness. These investments are more than just financial—they are a commitment to the future of our community. They ensure that Clarendon County's youngest and most vulnerable citizens have the opportunity to enter kindergarten healthy, prepared, and ready to succeed.

Thank you for recognizing the importance of early childhood education and for working alongside us to create positive and lasting outcomes. Your support enables us to maximize our resources and achieve our shared goals. Together, we are making a significant difference and paving the way for a brighter future for all of our children!

Serving Clarendon County's children birth through age five.

"This child's journey beautifully illustrates the impact that dedicated professionals like Ivorydell Tindal-Bannister can have on a child's development."

Anitra Hammett
Parents As Teachers Supervisor



PROGRAMS

PARENTING

Parents as Teachers

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

53

children served

36

group meetings
and events

948

home visits

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

Free, high-quality books mailed to the home of children from birth until age five.

424

children served

4,026

books distributed

EARLY CARE & EDUCATION

Training & Professional Development

Certified and registered training hours for the early childhood workforce.

954

children served

27

providers served

17

certified training
hours

Quality Enhancement

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

90

children served

2

providers served

55

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.

17

children served

1

schools served

102

home visits

Child Care Scholarships

Eligible children receive tuition-free enrollment at quality child care centers.

10

children served

10

families served

3

providers served

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

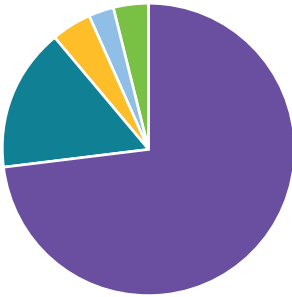


\$1 = \$3.16

Clarendon County First Steps leveraged \$284,315.13 from sources outside of state government, providing a match of \$2.16 for every state dollar invested.

EXPENDITURES

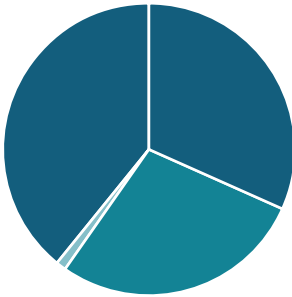
Total: \$525,383.92



- Parenting - \$384,050.07
- Early Care & Education - \$83,165.48
- School Transition - \$23,418.21
- Administrative- \$15,109.05
- Core Functions- \$19,641.11

FUNDING SOURCES

Total: \$416,119.02



- State Funding - \$131,803.89
- Federal Funding - \$117,178.95
- Private Funding - \$4,395.18
- In-kind Contributions - \$162,741.00

FUNDING SUPPORT BY SOUTH CAROLINA FIRST STEPS

State Education Improvement Act (EIA) Funding
 Federal Preschool Development Grant Funding*
 Federal ESSER Funding**

State Income Tax Check-off and Private Donations to SC First Steps

**Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five Initiative (PDG B-5), Grant Number 90TP0080-01-00 from the Office of Child Care, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, awarded to the South Carolina Department of Social Services, Division of Early Care and Education*

***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.



Darla Lee

Board Chair

Dear Friends and Partners,

Welcome to our 2023-2024 annual report for Clarendon County First Steps! This report offers a comprehensive overview of our efforts and achievements over the past year as we continue our most important work to prepare Clarendon County’s preschool children for success in school and in life.

Clarendon County First Steps is dedicated to supporting early childhood education through a range of initiatives and programs designed to enhance the developmental foundations of our youngest learners. Our focus remains steadfast on ensuring that every child in our community has the opportunity to enter school ready to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

In this report, you will gain insight into our work. Highlights include:

- A look at the successes our key initiatives, including early literacy programs, parent engagement activities, and professional development for educators; and
- A summary of our financial status (including funding sources and expenditures) in order to provide transparency and accountability.

The Clarendon County First Steps Partnership Board and I are proud of the progress made, and we are grateful for the support from our community partners, stakeholders, and dedicated staff. Together, we are laying a solid foundation for a brighter future for Clarendon County’s youngest and most vulnerable citizens. Thank you for your continued commitment and support!

Our Local Supporters

Clarendon County First Steps Partnership Board
 Clarendon County School District
 First Book
 Kaplan Early Learning Company
 South Carolina Department of Social Services
 South Carolina Endeavors

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