



2023-2024

ANNUAL REPORT



FIRST STEPS IS HERE

Last year, because of Sumter County First Steps:



330 children

were directly served in Sumter County



583 parents & caregivers

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



168 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 SUMTER COUNTY

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

8,475

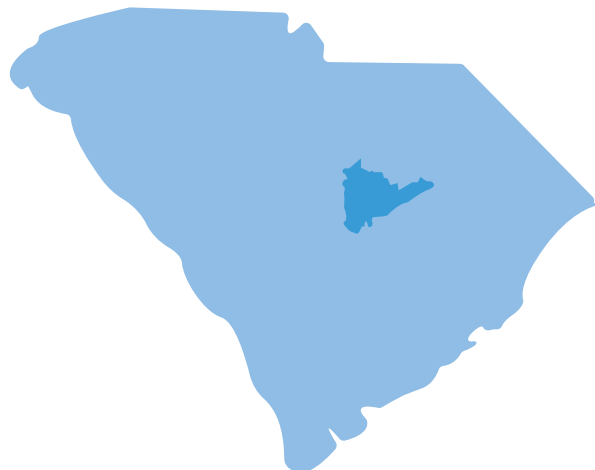
children under 6

42%

of young children live in poverty or low-income households

74%

of kindergarteners are considered "not ready" for school



OUR MISSION

Sumter County First Steps will cultivate, nurture and develop opportunities for children and families for success in school and life by maximizing public and private community resources to deliver, enhance and expand high quality early childhood services.



Julia A. Nelson

Executive Director

SCFS makes every effort to provide quality strategies and programs and only implement evidence-based programs. Our programs empower families, children and childcare providers with the skills needed to ensure school readiness. It is our goal to help children reach long-term success through their adult life.

The success that we experienced is due to the commitment of our board, parents, school district, childcare providers, well trained staff and other community partner in early education to collaborate and share challenges and share limited resources for the greater good of our youngest population.

We look forward to the challenges and opportunities to ameliorate school readiness in Sumter County.

Serving Sumter County's children birth through age five.

During an end of year celebration for PAT, a parent stood up and addressed the attendees. She expressed her gratitude for everything she had learned from the Parents As Teachers program. She then began to give a short testimony about the challenges growing up in the foster childcare and the lack of examples of "good parenting" until being involved in PAT.

Sumter 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.

89

children served

11

group meetings
and events

2,109

home visits

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

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

232

children served

232

families served

1,477

books distributed

HIPPY

Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) is a home visiting program that supports parents in their role as a child's first and most important teacher.

9

children served

7

group meetings
and events

246

home visits

EARLY CARE & EDUCATION

Child Care Scholarships

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

63

children served

54

families served

10

providers served

Training & Professional Development

Certified and registered training hours for the early childhood workforce.

6,653

children served

116

providers served

24

certified training
hours

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

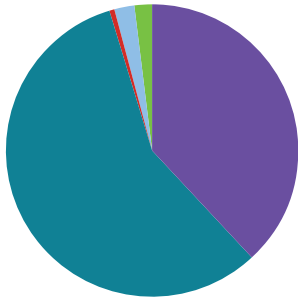


\$1 = \$2.72

Sumter County First Steps leveraged \$614,401.40 from sources outside of state government, providing a match of \$1.72 for every state dollar invested.

EXPENDITURES

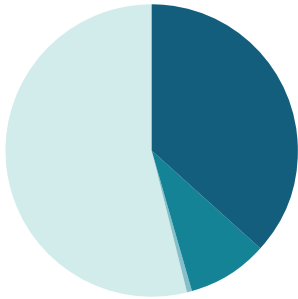
Total: \$1,029,209.35



- Parenting - \$392,310.40
- Early Care & Education - \$588,808.34
- Health - \$5,750.49
- Administrative - \$25,077.19
- Core Functions - \$17,262.93

FUNDING SOURCES

Total: \$971,246.34



- State Funding - \$356,844.94
- Federal Funding - \$88,043.69
- Private Funding - \$4,654.71
- In-kind Contributions - \$521,703

FUNDING SUPPORT BY SOUTH CAROLINA FIRST STEPS

State Education Improvement Act (EIA) Funding
 State READY Funding*
 Federal AmeriCorps Service Site
 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.

Board of Directors

Toni Brew
Billy Bennett
Michael Jonas
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Wanda Ramsey
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