



ANNUAL REPORT

2018-2019

THE NEED

IN SOUTH CAROLINA:

42%

of people live in a childcare desert, where there are more than three times as many children as licensed child care slots

53%

of children ages 3 and 4 are not enrolled in nursery school or preschool



IN AIKEN COUNTY:

9,800

children under age 5

54%

of young children live in poverty or low-income households

65%

of kindergartners are considered "not ready" for school

OUR MISSION

"Through collaboration, Aiken County First Steps empowers families and caregivers to **prepare their children for school success** by maximizing public and private community resources to deliver, enhance and expand high-quality early childhood services".

OUR APPROACH



High quality programs and services for children and families



Intensive training, resources and support for childcare providers



Strategic partnerships and community education

OUR IMPACT

3,943

number of children and adults served by Aiken County First Steps in 2018-2019

JOIN US

We rely on a community of partners, donors, and volunteers – **people like you** – who believe in a brighter future for children and families in our community.

687 Explorer Trail Aiken SC 29801 | 803-306-1343 | scfirststeps.org/Aiken

Data provided by:



Marcia L. Nash, M.Ed.
Executive Director
Aiken County First Steps

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It Couldn't Be Done

Somebody said that it couldn't be done, but he with a chuckle replied That "maybe it couldn't," but he would be one who wouldn't say so till he'd tried. So he buckled right in with the trace of a grin on his face. If he worried, he hid it. He started to sing as he tackled the thing that couldn't be done, and he did it.

Somebody scoffed: "Oh, you'll never do that; At least no one has done it"; But he took off his coat and he took off his hat, and the first thing we knew he'd begun it. With a lift of his chin and a bit of a grin, without any doubting or quiddit, he started to sing as he tackled the thing that couldn't be done, and he did it.

There are thousands to tell you it cannot be done, there are thousands to prophesy failure; There are thousands to point out to you one by one, the dangers that wait to assail you. But just buckle it in with a bit of a grin, just take off your coat and go to it; Just start to sing as you tackle the thing that "couldn't be done," and you'll do it. ~ Edgar Albert Guest

OUR GOALS

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

- Goal 1: Increase numbers served from rural areas by engaging the local communities by asking community members what they need, not just telling them. (all programs)
- Goal 2: Increase community engagement– in terms of time, money, clients, collaborations, and in-kind support.
- Goal 3: Support the early childhood workforce through quality training, incentives, and working with administrators and child care directors.
- Goal 4: Empower families using a strengths-based/asset-based approach, not a deficit approach. Build trust.
- Goal 5: Engage and mobilize the community to promote early childhood education programs county-wide.

As a recipient of Aiken County First Steps Scholarship services 12 years ago, I am proud to say that my daughter continues to soar to success in all subjects in school. As Board Chair, I will continue to lead and follow my colleagues as we continue to get Aiken County's children health and ready for school and life.

Tracy Brown, Board Chair

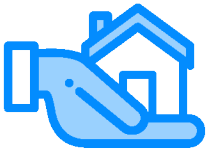


PARENTS AS TEACHERS



an evidence-based program

Parents as Teachers (PAT) is a home visiting program designed to build strong communities, thriving families and children who are healthy, safe and ready to succeed. PAT services include:



Personal visits from a parent educator at least twice monthly



Monthly group connections with other PAT families



Screenings and assessments to identify developmental concerns



Connections to outside resources that families may need to succeed



PAT IN THE NEWS

PAT recently received the highest rating from the federal Prevention Services Clearinghouse. This recognition validates the effectiveness of Parents as Teachers as a strategy for improving parenting practices, promoting early detection of developmental delays and health issues, preventing child abuse and neglect, and enhancing school readiness and success.

PAT IN ABC COUNTY 2018-2019

20

families served

386

total home visits



Parents as Teachers®





COUNTDOWN TO KINDERGARTEN



an evidence-informed program

Developed by South Carolina First Steps – and identified as a promising state practice by the National Governor’s Association in 2005 – Countdown to Kindergarten (CTK) is a home visitation program pairing the families of rising kindergartners with their future teachers during the summer before school entry. Teachers complete six visits with each family, establishing strong connections during the summer that facilitate classroom learning throughout the year.

CTK BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

4

kindergarten teachers
trained as home visitors

38

children served

222

total home and school
visits



**WE READY! WE READY!
WE READY FOR
SCHOOL!**





CHILD CARE QUALITY ENHANCEMENT



an evidence-based program

Many private child care centers strive to provide high quality care but lack the resources often available to publicly-funded early childhood programs. Our Child Care Quality Enhancement (QE) program aims to produce measurable improvements in the quality of care provided to young children.

Our services include:



Rigorous quality assessments



On-site technical assistance at least twice monthly



Funding for equipment and materials



Training and workforce development



Coordination with community partners

QE BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

4

child care providers served

97

number of TA visits provided

284

number of children 0-5 enrolled in provider classrooms

Aiken County First Steps has provided awesome Quality Enhancement services to our childcare center, staff and children. As a result, we were the first childcare center in Aiken County to receive the SCFS 4K grant.

Beth Rautio, Owner/Director, Tiny Treasures Daycare Center



CHILD CARE TRAINING



an evidence-based program

High-quality child care hinges on high-quality professional development that meets the needs of the local child care workforce. Our training programs are certified through the SC Center for Child Care Career Development and include topics in the areas of nutrition, health and safety, curriculum, child guidance, professional development and program administration. Our 2018-2019 trainings included:

Communication & Language Development of Young Children
Gross Motor & Fine Motor Development of Young Children
Relationship Building To Promote Social Emotional Development
Blood-Borne Pathogens- Health Safety Training
Successful School Transition
Going from Boss to Coach
Director's/ Staff Training InvestiGATOR Club, Connecting Children to the World
I Am a Mandated Reporter
Tracking: Keep Up with Children
Expect The Unexpected: Are You Prepared?
Creating a Foundation for Coaching

TRAINING BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

152

total training attendance

148

child care teachers and
directors served

16.5

number of training
sessions offered

Aiken County First Steps trainings are always very informative. The presenters are professional when they give us information and are always eager to follow up with us when we have questions. Thanks you First Steps!

Pamela Frazier, Training Participant



CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIPS



an evidence-based program

For many families in Aiken County, the cost of quality childcare is out of reach.

Our scholarship program makes payments to childcare providers to care for children from low-income families so their parents can return to school or work.

Eligibility includes meeting at least 2 SCFS risk factors. Aiken County First Steps offers scholarships to families enrolled in Parents as Teachers program, as well as income-eligible children whose parent attends school or works at least 20 hours per week.

SCHOLARSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

34

number of children
served

4

number of providers
served

20

number of
developmental
screenings provided

**100% the money paid to child care providers
goes back into our local economy to benefit the
citizens of Aiken County.**

4K

FOUR-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN



an evidence-based program

South Carolina First Steps provides eligible children with free enrollment in full-day four-year-old kindergarten programs. In coordination with First Steps local partnerships and more than 200 private, faith- and community-based preschool providers, First Steps 4K expands access to quality child care across the state.



ELIGIBILITY

To qualify for enrollment, a child must:

- ✓ Be 4 years old on or before September 1
- ✓ Qualify for Medicaid or a free or reduced-price lunch program
- ✓ Live in one of 64 qualifying school districts

FIRST STEPS 4K IN AIKEN COUNTY 2018-2019

218

children enrolled

15

participating classrooms

4K NEWS

In fiscal year 2019-2020, South Carolina First Steps is launching a pilot program to expand 4K enrollment within underserved communities. Age- and income-eligible children residing in any SC school district may qualify for a slot in a participating center that also serves students from eligible districts.



PUBLIC AWARENESS

Aiken County First Steps increases understanding in the community of school readiness domains and assessment, and “what works” to help young children succeed and makes information easily accessible in all communities and for all families. We strengthen interagency accountability & collaboration through the Focus on Five-Early Learning in Aiken County and Babies First Teacher in Aiken County and develop, produce and/or distribute public education materials to promote partnership's mission and inform the public of available resources.

We also sponsor, co-sponsor and/or participate in community events that reach our target audience, encourage community engagement and create public awareness and educate and engage local and state policymakers and other community leaders on the local impact of First Steps. We network, coordinate and convene local stakeholders to collaboratively build a system of care for early childhood.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND OUTREACH BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

452

materials
distributed

5

events held

600

total event
attendance





COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Addressing the needs of young children is a shared endeavor. In addition to providing services to families and support for childcare providers, Aiken County First Steps mobilizes partners and community members to ensure all children in Aiken County begin school ready to succeed. We serve as:

LOCAL PORTAL

connecting preschool children and
their families to services

CONVENER

of community stakeholders to develop an effective
and comprehensive early childhood system

CHAMPION

of the importance of school
readiness to our children's future

OUR PARTNERSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

789

Families served
through Babies First
Teacher Initiative

25

Early Education agencies
and volunteers
participated in the Focus
of the First Five Initiative





OUR SUPPORTERS

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

FUNDING SUPPORT

South Carolina First Steps: \$378,803

SC Center for Child Care Career Development: \$2,000

Women of Woodside: \$2,000

Shirley von Beck: \$100

IN-KIND SUPPORT

Aiken County Public Schools: \$67,564.11

Pamela Smith: \$180

Shadie Hall: \$12.00

Shirley von Beck: \$50.00

David & Bobbie J. Walker: \$40.00

Mary Stone: \$33.00

Vaucluse United Methodist Church: \$1,112.00

William Price: \$23.92

USDA Forest Service: \$200.00

Andrea Seigler: \$20.00

JOIN US

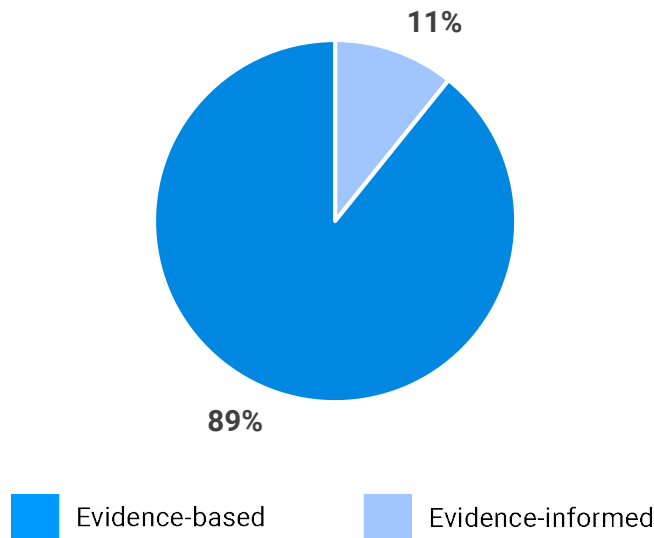
For more information on partnership opportunities, call us at (803)-306-1343



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

OUR INVESTMENT IN QUALITY

Expenditures of State Funds by Program Type



ESTIMATION OF COST SAVINGS

Since inception, Aiken County First Steps has leveraged **\$2,827,849** from sources outside of state government.

That's **\$.32** for every state dollar.

SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES BY STRATEGY

	State Funding	Federal Funding	Private Funding	In-Kind Contributions	Total
Parents as Teachers	\$86,661	\$0	\$0	\$35,822	\$122,483
Child Care Quality Enhancement	\$43,207	\$0	\$0	\$9,794	\$53,001
Child Care Training	\$30,267	\$0	\$569	\$5,298	\$36,134
Scholarship Initiatives	\$76,876	\$0	\$0	\$3,007	\$79,883
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$19,362	\$0	\$1,374	\$2,721	\$23,457
Administrative Support	\$30,558	\$0	\$446	\$5,619	\$36,623
Core Functions	\$32,721	\$0	\$90	\$7,073	\$39,884
Total Expenses	319,652	\$0	\$2,479	\$69,334	\$391,465



LEADERSHIP

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Andrea Seigler, Early Childhood Specialist
Shaquina McClue, Early Childhood Specialist
Joseph Williams, III, Parent Educator

CONTACT US

687 Explorer Trail | 803-306-1343 | scfirsteps.org/Aiken