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.
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 (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
COUNTDOWN TO KINDERGARTEN

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!
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
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**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total training attendance</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child care teachers and directors served</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of training sessions offered</td>
<td>16.5</td>
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</table>

“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
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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>number of children served</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>number of providers served</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>number of developmental screenings provided</td>
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</table>

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

scfirststeps.org/Aiken
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Type</th>
<th>State Funding</th>
<th>Federal Funding</th>
<th>Private Funding</th>
<th>In-Kind Contributions</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>Parents as Teachers</td>
<td>$86,661</td>
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<td>$0</td>
<td>$35,822</td>
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<td>$0</td>
<td>$2,479</td>
<td>$69,334</td>
<td>$391,465</td>
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LEADERSHIP

STAFF
Marcia L. Nash, M.Ed., Executive Director
Tammy Brown, Administrative Assistant
Linda Washington, Parent Educator
Andrea Seigler, Early Childhood Specialist
Shaquina McClue, Early Childhood Specialist
Joseph Williams, III, Parent Educator

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Marlea Bodie
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CONTACT US
687 Explorer Trail | 803-306-1343| scfirsteps.org/Aiken