



BAMBERG COUNTY



**FIRST  
STEPS**

Getting children ready for school.

# 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 BAMBERG COUNTY:

**654**

children under age 5

**63.8%**

of young children live in poverty or low-income households

**74%**

of kindergartners are considered "not ready" for school

## OUR MISSION

To Ensure Every That Child in Bamberg County Will Arrive At The First Grade Healthy and Ready To Learn!

## 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

**927**

number of children and adults served by Bamberg 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.

## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



**Pauletta Plowden**  
Executive Director  
Bamberg County First Steps

Bamberg County First Steps is very proud to serve as an ambassador of high quality early childhood education for our small rural county. As a National Blue Ribbon Affiliate for Parents As Teachers, a home visiting program that's designed to build strong healthy families, Bamberg County First Steps remains committed to excellence in getting our youngest learners ready for the first grade. Investing in the lives of our children remains the most important socio-economic responsibility that we have to our community; as children are our greatest and most important resource. Bamberg County First Steps celebrates its twentieth year of increasing school readiness by affording high quality parenting services, daycare scholarships to working families, professional early care directors/teachers training, health and wellness camps and many other family driven wrap-around services. Bamberg County First Steps would like to thank the state, our board, local school districts, families, businesses and community partners and friends for your many years of support to this important educational initiative. Bamberg County First Steps will continue to work diligently to empower and prepare our youngest learners for future SUCCESS!

## OUR GOALS

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

- Bamberg County First Steps will increase the capacity of parents to be their child's first and most important teachers by expanding the Parents as Teachers evidenced based home visiting program.
- Bamberg County First Steps will strengthening families by offering daycare scholarships to working families and those attending schools.
- Bamberg County First Steps will offer professional training and development to earlycare principals, directors and teachers.
- Bamberg County First Steps will serve as a community convener to address the needs of preschool children in support of state readiness priorities.

We have had a long history of diligence and support for the educational programs in Bamberg County and are glad to further the work of First Steps in making sure our kids are prepared and equipped to learn and grow. "We greatly appreciate and support the investment that Bamberg County First Steps has made in ensuring that that our children are ready for the future!

– Attorney J. Christopher Wilson, Wilson Law Group LLC

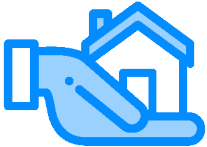


# PARENTS AS TEACHERS



*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. Bamberg County First Steps is a National PAT Blue Ribbon Affiliate for Excellence in Evidenced-Based Parenting Services.

## PAT IN BAMBERG COUNTY 2018-2019

**23**

families served

**343**

total home visits

Bamberg County First Steps improved family home visits by an average of 14.91 per family. Identified and addressed 11 potential developmental delays and made connections with services for medical homes, housing resources, employment, DSS/TANF, dental, and transportation.



Parents as Teachers.  
*Model Affiliate*

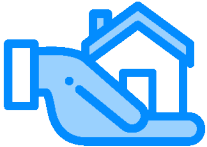


# PARENTS AS TEACHERS



*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



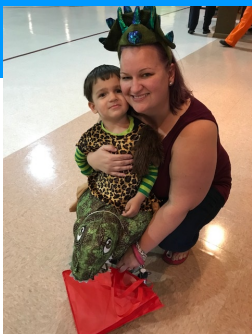
## Parenting Impact Statement

### Adrift, Anchors Away

All too often in life people see anchors as something pulling you down; a weight without any benefit. Bamberg County First Steps is working hard to change the image of an anchor from a negative to a positive. An anchor no longer pulls you down, keeping you from reaching your full potential, now it is a stabilizing force when you are adrift.

As a member of a small community in the South everybody knows everybody and one way or another there's a family connection. In theory that should be a benefit to parents and children, however, sometimes it can make it hard to show our true struggle for fear of being judged. In my experience, First Steps has been a safe haven where I can turn during the turbulent times in my life. My mother was hospitalized after a car accident and within a year she had passed away from a heart attack. It would have been so easy for me to go off the rails and sink into the darkness that these traumatic events caused. With the help of First Steps, I was taught how to deal with my emotions and how to be there for my young son and helped me to explain what happened to his grandmother. I'm not sure I would have been equipped to explain death to a three year old had it not been for the support and steadying hand of this powerful organization.

There are times I am still adrift dealing with the ups and downs of losing a parent, I take comfort in knowing I am not alone and I have an anchor to steady me when the waters get rough.



Kristine, Mother of Landon, Age 4 (BCFS Board Member)



Parents as Teachers.  
*Model Affiliate*



## 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:

**How Teachers Enrich Language & Concept Development**

**Preschool to Primary: Understanding Child Development**

**Creating An Environment For Health & Safety Practices/  
Blood Borne Pathogens**

**Promoting Culturally Appropriate Positive Guidance For Children**

**Marketing Your Child Care Business – Part 1 & Part 2**

### TRAINING BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

**197**

total training attendance

**76**

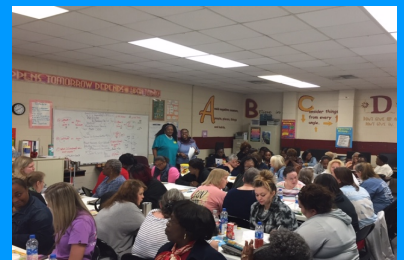
child care teachers and  
directors served

**5**

number of training  
sessions offered

We greatly appreciate Bamberg County First Steps for collaborating with our school for the following initiatives: Professional Training and Development courses offered to our early childhood teachers in strengthening their skill sets, the MOMMYCISE Health and Wellness Project and the PAT Program that has encouraged many mothers to focus more on school readiness for their young children.

-Principal Stacy Walter, Richard Carroll Elementary School





## CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIPS



*an evidence-based program*

Too many Bamberg County families cannot afford quality daycare for their babies because the cost of quality child care is out of financial reach. Our scholarship program makes payments to child care providers to care for children from low-income families so their parents can return to school or work fulltime. Bamberg County First Steps serves families in the greatest need. Among our scholarship families 95% live in poverty, 10% didn't graduate from high school and 5% are teen parents. As an eligibility requirement for the child care scholarship program, all families will actively participant in the Parents as Teachers Program, receive developmental screenings and are connected to needed wrap-around community services.

### SCHOLARSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

**11**

number of children  
served

**2**

number of providers  
served

**12**

number of  
developmental  
screenings provided



My son Thomas is 19 months old and this is my 2<sup>nd</sup> time enrolling in First Steps. Ms. Dorsey, my parent educator has been a blessing to our family. My son has shown tremendous progress and loves interacting with other children at group meetings. He also enjoys receiving books during our home visits. Ms. Smith & Ms. Plowden have been very supportive to my family over the years in assisting us with employment and other community services. Bamberg County First Steps is like family and I love them!

**Annette & Thomas**



# 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 BAMBERG COUNTY 2018-2019

# 38

children enrolled

# 3

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.







## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

---

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

We serve as a:

### 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

14

Local Portal and  
Convener  
Meetings and  
Events

23

School Readiness  
Partnership  
Collaborative  
Engagements



Bamberg County First Steps has served diligently on the Bamberg Job Corps Community Relations Board bridging a collaborative relationship with our staff, students and local community in promoting student achievement and advancement.

**Chris Green, Bamberg Job Corp  
Community Liaison**



## OUR SUPPORTERS

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

### FUNDING SUPPORT

State of South Carolina: \$200,000 (through SC First Steps)

Bamberg Council Recreation Grant: \$482.75

Tri-County Foundation: \$1,000

AJ Cann: \$1,000

FEMA United Way: \$1,627

Greenville Technical College Training Grant / (CCCD): \$2,000

Bamberg Family Practice: \$350

Senator Bradley Hutto: \$100

Ernestine Barnwell: \$50

Brabham Oil: \$100

Dr. Charles Gaillard: \$200

Cindy Hurst: \$450

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. (Denmark Alumnae): \$100

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. (Nu Tau Omega & Eta Nu): \$200



Thanks to grants from the Tri-County Community Foundation and the Bamberg County Recreation Grants, we expanded our Health and Wellness program by more than 40% last year and have empowered families to focus on obesity and proper nutrition for over thirteen years.

**Your support makes a difference.**



## OUR SUPPORTERS

### FUNDING SUPPORT

Phoenix Specialty: \$200

Home Federal Savings & Loan: \$50

Linda Fair: \$25

Brooker's Hardware: \$25

Carolyn Watson: \$50

Vaughn Electronics: \$30

State Farm Insurance (John Haralson): \$50

Betty Dowling: \$25

Evelyn Smith-Smart: \$40

Attorney Evert Comer: \$25

Sharon Hammond: \$50

Mary Jane's School of Dance: \$50

Patricia Harley: \$25

Mt. Zion United Methodist Church: \$100

### IN-KIND SUPPORT

Bamberg School District One

DSS – ABC Child Care Scholarships

Wilson Law Group, LLC

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. – Eta Nu & Nu Tau Omega

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. – Denmark Alumnae Chapter





## OUR SUPPORTERS

### IN-KIND SUPPORT

Goody's Department Store – Bamberg

Awena Hurst

Jake Gallop

Guardian ad Litem – Cass Elias McCarter/Jackie Hancock

Blue Choice Medicaid Health Plan

CASA Family Systems

Family Solutions of the Low Country

SC Witness Project

DHHS/BabyNet

DHEC

Southeastern Housing and Community Development

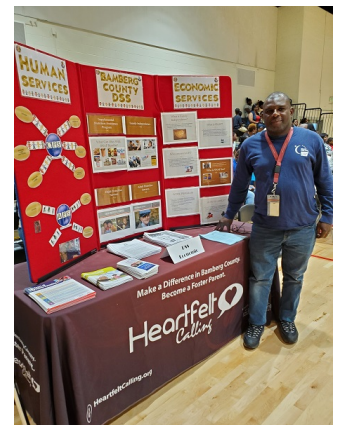
Bamberg County DSS

Well Care Health Plans

Bamberg Job Corps

Wells Fargo

Toys for Tots



## JOIN US

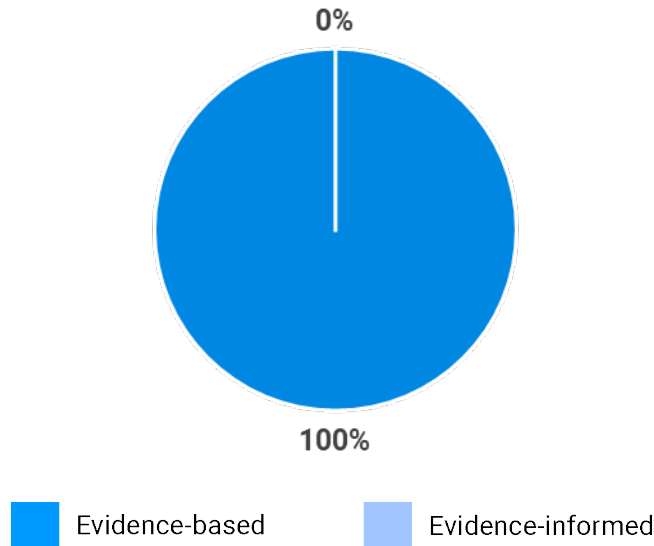
For more information on partnership opportunities, visit our website at  
**[www.bamberg1.net/firststeps](http://www.bamberg1.net/firststeps)**



## FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

### OUR INVESTMENT IN QUALITY

#### Expenditures of State Funds by Program Type



### ESTIMATION OF COST SAVINGS

Since inception, Bamberg County First Steps has leveraged **\$2,545,025** from sources outside of state government.

That's **\$0.79** for every state dollar.

### SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES BY STRATEGY

	State Funding	Federal Funding	Private Funding	In-Kind Contributions	Total
Parents as Teachers	\$98,341	\$5,818	\$991	\$133,918	\$239,068
Scholarship Initiatives	\$34,819	\$0	\$261	\$4,907	\$39,987
Child Care Training	\$28,055	\$2,616	\$4,395	\$3,550	\$38,616
Partnerships & Community Education	\$23,816	\$5,343	\$91	\$5,584	\$34,834
Administrative Support	\$17,738	\$167	\$730	\$3,765	\$22,400
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$202,769</b>	<b>\$13,944</b>	<b>\$6,468</b>	<b>\$151,724</b>	<b>\$374,905</b>



## LEADERSHIP

---

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Tracy Golden, Board Chair

Kristine Autry, Board Co-Chair

Darlene Bryant, Secretary

Iona Murdaugh, Asst. Secretary

Ernestine Barnwell

Johnell Gaines

Stephanie Bradley

Sheryl Gardner

Renne Brown

Loretta Glasper

Linda Fair

Patricia Harley

Dr. Charles Gaillard

### STAFF

Pauletta Plowden, Executive Director

Erica Smith, Program Manager/Parenting Supervisor

Actavia Bowers, Parent Educator

Latasha Dorsey, Parent Educator

## CONTACT US

**3788 Faust Street/PO Box 1129, Bamberg, SC 29003 | 803-245-6513 |  
[www.bamberg1.net/firststeps](http://www.bamberg1.net/firststeps)**

