



## 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 DILLON COUNTY:

**1,998**

children under age 5

**42.1%**

of young children live in poverty or low-income households

**74%**

of kindergartners are considered "not ready" for school

## OUR MISSION

"Every child in Dillon County is important and should experience a loving, stimulating, healthy, and safe environment ensured by a supportive family and community"

## 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

**1,244**

number of children and adults served by Dillon 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.

P.O. Box 295, Dillon SC 29536 | 843-774-0061 | [www.dillonfirststeps.com](http://www.dillonfirststeps.com)

Data provided by:

## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



**Shirleen D. Lewis, MS**  
Executive Director  
Dillon County First Steps

Greetings! I would like to personally thank all of the staff, board members, donors, and community partners for all of your support. Your financial gifts, in-kind contributions, time, and continued dedication to ensuring our children receive excellent early childhood education services help us to continue to fulfil our mission in “Getting Children Ready for School”.

Over the last fiscal year, Dillon County First Steps (DCFS) has been able to expand the services we provide to Dillon County Youngest Learners. This year we were able to successfully implement the Raising A Reader program by partnering with Hamer Canaan Head Start (Pee Dee CAP) to serve 63 children. Also, we were fortunate enough to work with two child care providers to provide on site technical assistance through Quality Enhancement to help improve quality learning by using Environmental Rating Scales. In the future, we look forward to expanding both programs to promote literacy and improve childcare quality in Dillon County.

*Shirleen D. Lewis*

## OUR GOALS

Dillon County First Steps 2018-2020 Strategic Plan for the early child care and education of the county’s youngest learners builds on a series of significant steps taken over the last 20 years by South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness. Our strategic plan was created to support all Dillon County families to ensure that their children arrive at school healthy and ready to succeed. Over the last two years and in this fiscal year, the early childhood community and local partnership will focus on:

- Implementing Quality Enhancement to at least two early childhood facilities in Dillon County to help approve quality.
- Increase the population of Hispanic families to participate in DCFS programs.
- Partner with Lake View and Latta Child Care Facilities to implement the Raising A Reader Program.

I am so proud of the progress the staff and board has made in expanding the services that Dillon County First Steps provides. It is my hope that we will continue to grow and be able to serve children with a quality child care program. I’m excited about our future.

**Nina Bradley, DCFS Board Chair**

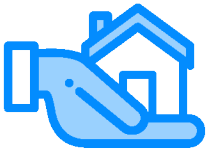


# PARENTS AS TEACHERS



*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 DILLON COUNTY 2018-2019

**63**

families served

**801**

total home visits

Parents as Teachers showed an increase of 85% with Keys to Interactive Parenting Scale (KIPS), and increase of 90% in Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory (ACIRI). 937 Books were given to families to allow cuddle time reading at home. A total of 106 Educational Toys were given for Christmas and Year End Celebration to help increase the child's education to insure that they will be on target to start the 1<sup>st</sup> Grade.



Parents as Teachers

# Highlights from Parents As Teachers



Thanksgiving  
and Easter  
Group  
Connections



Pictures from  
Class of 2019  
PAT Graduation



Week of the  
Young Child  
Event with  
Children's  
Author: Taylor  
Dee





# 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

2

child care providers served

53

number of TA visits provided

51

number of children 0-5 enrolled in provider classrooms

“ Little Treasures Christian Learning Center showed an increase of .54 average with the ITERS/ECERS assessment for the Infant and 3 Year Old Classrooms. Mother’s Love Daycare showed an increase of .84 average with the ITERS/ECERS assessment for the Toddler Room and the 3 Year Old Room. Both Centers received \$3084.00 in classroom and curriculum materials and books. ”



## 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:

**Emotional & Social Development in Preschoolers**

**Setting The Tone: The Directors Role**

**Nutrition Education: Marketing It to Families**

**Incorporating SC Early Learning Standards In Lesson Plans**

**The 1<sup>st</sup> Step To Social Emotional Learning In Early Childhood**

**I'm Not Having A very Good Day: Helping Children Manage**

**Curriculum Activities For The Outdoor Learning Environment**

**The Business Of Child Care**

**Promoting Creative Experiences & Activities**

**Promoting Creative Experiences & Activities**

**Blood Borne Pathogens**

### TRAINING BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

**194**

total training attendance

**50**

child care teachers and directors served

**10**

number of training sessions offered

Local, quality, child care trainings provided by Dillon County First Steps is a blessing to me and my staff.

**Priscilla Moody, Owner  
Moody's Day Care**



# 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 ABC COUNTY 2018-2019

# 60

children enrolled

# 4

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.





## LITERACY PROGRAM

Raising A Reader (RAR) is a proven and research-based family engagement and early literacy program for children ages 0-8 that help develop, practice, and maintain the home-based literacy routines necessary for school success. The program promotes and fosters healthy brain development, parent-child bonding and develops the early language and literacy skills that are critical for academic and life success by engaging parents in a routine of “book cuddling” with their children.

### Raising A Reader BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

54

families served

1

provider served





## 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Hallow-Read Day

Dillon County First Steps had its first annual Hallow-Read Day on October 31, 2018. The purpose of the event was to promote literacy across the county. DCFS Staff and Board Members dressed up and read to students all across the county at primary schools, family childcare homes and childcare facilities.

# 313

children served

# 10

providers served





## 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, Dillon County First Steps mobilizes partners and community members to ensure all children in Dillon 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

20

Community Partners  
and Sponsors

\$16,530

Donations through  
fundraising, community  
partners, and grants.

“The Duke Energy Foundation is so happy to be able to support Dillon County First Steps in expanding their Parents As Teacher Program. The program is so important in helping the children in this county prepare for school.”

Mindy Taylor, Duke Energy Foundation



## OUR SUPPORTERS

---

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

### FUNDING SUPPORT

**Walmart #627, \$400.00**  
**Walmart #6571, \$250.00**  
**Dillon County United Way, \$270.00**  
**SC Child Care Career Development Incentive Grant, \$2,000.00**  
**SC Ports Authority, \$2,500.00**  
**Child Care Training, \$1,035.00**  
**3 on 3 Basket Ball Tournament, \$1,575.00**  
**Dillon County Council, \$500.00**  
**Kid's Limited Development Center, \$1,000.00**  
**Dillon County Board of Education, \$1,000.00**  
**McLeod – Dillon, \$1,000.00**  
**The Duke Energy Foundation, \$5,000.00**

### IN-KIND SUPPORT

**Dillon School District Four**  
**City of Dillon Wellness Center**  
**Dillon County Public Library**  
**Lytch's Sign Service**  
**Kelly's Quik Print**  
**Dillon High School**  
**Child Care Resource & Referral**

## JOIN US

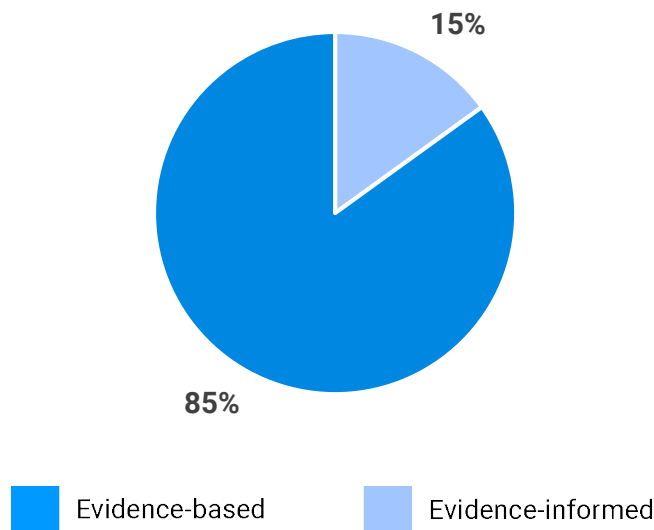
For more information on partnership opportunities, visit our website at:  
<https://dillonfirststeps.com/>



## FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

### OUR INVESTMENT IN QUALITY

Expenditures by Program Type



### ESTIMATION OF COST SAVINGS

Since inception, Dillon County First Steps has leveraged **\$1,112,217** from sources outside of state government.

That's **\$0.22** for every state dollar.

### SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES BY STRATEGY

	State Funding	Federal Funding	Private Funding	In-Kind Contributions	Total
Parents as Teachers	\$74,930	\$	\$51,803	\$3,085	\$129,819
Raising A Reader	\$25,081	\$	\$	\$1,591	\$26,672
Head Start Programming	\$	\$4,006	\$	\$	\$4,006
Child Care Training	\$23,975	\$	\$1,293	\$2,270	\$27,538
Childcare Quality Enhance	\$42,751	\$	\$941	\$1,690	\$45,382
Partnerships & Community Education	\$14,474	\$897	\$3,393	\$2,419	\$21,183
Administrative Support	\$17,224	\$	\$1,790	\$1,815	\$20,828
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$198,435</b>	<b>\$4,903</b>	<b>\$59,220</b>	<b>\$12,871</b>	<b>\$275,428</b>



## LEADERSHIP

---

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Nina Bradley, Board Chair  
Kenneth Smith, Co Chair  
Elder Gabriel Salmon  
Ressie Jones  
Dr. Michael McRae  
Doretha Page  
Reverend Allen Nesmith  
Angela Rogers  
Preston Greene, III  
Crystal Johnson  
Millie Odom  
Beryl Collington  
Alisha McCall  
Brenda Bucy  
Lisa Armstrong

### STAFF

Shirleen D. Lewis, Executive Director  
Shantel McRae, Parent as Teacher Supervisor  
Angela Coward, Finance Manager  
Geraldine Ellis, Parent Educator  
Jessica Swindler, Parent Educator  
Melinda Robinson, Parent Educator

## CONTACT US

P.O. Box 295 Dillon, SC 29536 | (843)774-0061 | <https://dillonfirststeps.com/>

