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

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
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
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 (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 1st Grade.
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
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.
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 1st 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**
**Blood Borne Pathogens**

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**TRAINING BY THE NUMBERS**

2018-2019

194

50

10

Total training attendance

Child care teachers and directors served

Number of training sessions offered

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“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
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
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
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:

**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

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**OUR PARTNERSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS**
2018-2019

- **20** Community Partners and Sponsors
- **$16,530** Donations through fundraising, community partners, and grants.

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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
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/](https://dillonfirststeps.com/)
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

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<th></th>
<th>State Funding</th>
<th>Federal Funding</th>
<th>Private Funding</th>
<th>In-Kind Contributions</th>
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<td><strong>$12,871</strong></td>
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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/