



Parents as Teachers hosts 'Library Night'



# 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 FAIRFIELD COUNTY:

1,013

children under age 5

63.1%

of young children live in poverty or low-income households

51%

of kindergartners are considered "not ready" for school

## OUR MISSION

To optimize school readiness for all children by helping those communities to:  
**Recognize** the role and responsibilities families have as the first and most important teacher of children.  
**Motivate** individuals and communities to help stabilize, strengthen, and empower families. *(This will enhance the social skills, emotional well-being, health, communication skills and general knowledge which are essential in promoting readiness of young children to succeed in school.)*  
**Enable** the communities to successfully accomplish tasks through the coordination of personnel, education, and financial resources.

## 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

917

number of children and adults served by Fairfield 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



**PATTI WILKES**  
Executive Director  
Fairfield County First Steps

As I reflect on FY 2019, I am delighted to report that our staff and board have made great strides toward expanding our visibility in the community. In addition to our Annual Literacy Walk, we have reported monthly at the local interagency council and have worked closely with the School District and local newspaper for more outreach. We continue to work closely with the three childcare facilities, while DSS continues to make more referrals. The expansion of our Countdown to Kindergarten program, made possible through PDG funds and United Way, continues to make a positive difference in the relationship of parent, student, and teacher.

As you go through the pages of this report, I hope you are filled with the same hope for Fairfield County that I am. With KRA scores ranked in the top five for the state, board participation at an all time high, collaboration efforts that have included the School District and Fairfield County, and our parents staying enrolled in our programs for longer periods of time, we know that we are making a positive difference. Won't you join our team!?

## OUR GOALS

Our partnership's work, in collaboration with state and local partners, is focused on advancing Fairfield County towards these strategic goals to set the direction for how the organization intends to implement its mission and address the needs of its focus population for the duration of the plan:

- Increase the capacity of FCFS staff and board members to deliver and support evidence-based programs and practices
- Increase community awareness, engagement in, and support of FCFS programs and services.
- Convene committee around early education in the county.
- Identify FCFS as the portal for early education services

Our board is one that will propel this program. We are confident in the board and staff to be certain that we are serving the families and children who most need us.

**ERIC ROBINSON, BOARD CHAIR**

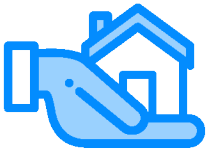


# PARENTS AS TEACHERS



*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 FAIRFIELD COUNTY 2018-2019

**33**

families served

**495**

total home visits

"First Steps really helps in providing me with constant updates on fetal development. I just think it is an awesome program. We do a lot of activities in the Parent Workshops and that keeps it interesting. - Sonia Miller PAT parent .



Parents as Teachers



## IMAGINATION LIBRARY



*an evidence-based program*

As the local affiliate of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, we provide free, high-quality books to children from birth until age five, no matter their family's income.

Children enrolled in our Imagination Library program receive one book per month by mail. Each title is selected by a panel of early childhood literacy experts, who are responsible for choosing books that meet the age-specific developmental needs of young children.

### IMAGINATION LIBRARY BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

**383**

children served

**3572**

books distributed

Books are **100%** free to any child in Fairfield County, from birth until their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. Fairfield County First Steps secures private funds to cover the cost of books and shipping fees.

**Join us by sponsoring a child for just \$30 a year.**





# 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

5

kindergarten teachers  
trained as home visitors

39

children served

227

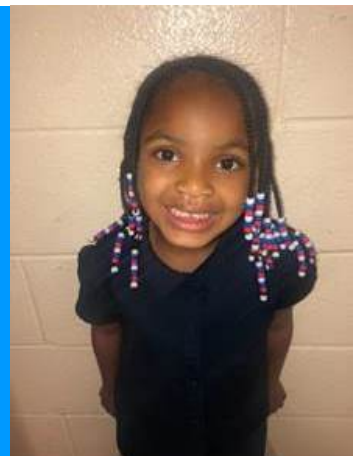
total home and school  
visits



“Countdown to Kindergarten is a wonderful opportunity for both families and teachers to start building relationships before the school year even begins. What I enjoy the most from this program, as a teacher, is to watch these little students excel in the classroom, not only academically, but with self-confidence and a new love for education!

Shown here is one of my students who went from CTK to Student of the Month!”

- Mary Swearingen, CTK teacher





## CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIPS



*an evidence-based program*

Fairfield County First Steps offers Childcare Tuition Assistance to a limited number of income eligible families whose parents attend work or school each year. Priority is given to those families who are already a part of the Tuition Assistance Program and then to those who are most in need. This program makes payments directly to the childcare provider to care for the child. In order to be a provider in this program, the facility must be certified as a Level B provider through ABC or working toward that level. Eligible families must qualify using a list of risk factors as provided by the State Board of Trustees. All clients in this program are also clients in our Parents as Teachers program and all children are registered for Imagination Library. All assessments are conducted on the enrolled children in order to connect them with any additional services they might need prior to starting school.

### SCHOLARSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

**15**

number of children  
served

**3**

number of providers  
served

**88**

number of  
developmental  
screenings provided

**100% the money paid to childcare providers  
goes back into our local economy to benefit the  
citizens of Fairfield 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 FAIRFIELD COUNTY 2018-2019

# 6

children enrolled

# 1

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.







# 1000 Books before Kindergarten



*an evidence-informed program*

1000 Books before Kindergarten program is set to foster a love of reading and being read to for our preschool teachers. We go into the classrooms of EVERY 4k class in Fairfield County reading to them. We provide the classroom with new books each visit and we also give take-home books to the students several times a year. Goals are set for each classroom and once the class reaches a goal, they are rewarded. For example:

Our Family Literacy program fosters a love of learning in both children and parents. Adults develop the language and literacy skills needed to support their children's early development, and children gain the foundational skills needed to succeed in school.

## 1000 BOOKS BEFORE KINDERGARTEN BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

# 166

students served

# 10

classrooms  
served



4K class at McCrorey Liston participate in 1000 Books before Kindergarten.



## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

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Addressing the needs of young children is a shared endeavor. In addition to providing services to families and support for childcare providers, Fairfield County First Steps mobilizes partners and community members to ensure all children in Fairfield 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

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## OUR PARTNERSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

# 21

Partners  
throughout the  
county

### Partnership Community Awareness Activities

In fiscal year 2018-2019, Fairfield County First Steps sponsored and participated in several community activities to promote awareness of the mission of First Steps as well as to support our community's families in ensuring that their children enter school prepared to succeed. These activities included a community Literacy Night, a National Night Out, fundraising activities, and presenting at various events on the role of First Steps in the community.



## OUR SUPPORTERS

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

### FUNDING SUPPORT

Winnsboro Rotary

United Way

Fairfield County First Steps Board

### IN-KIND SUPPORT

Dollywood Foundation : \$47,064.14

Winnsboro Woman's Club: meeting space for Eleven  
Parent Workshop group meetings.

Fairfield County School District purchased all toolkits for our  
Countdown to Kindergarten program.

## JOIN US

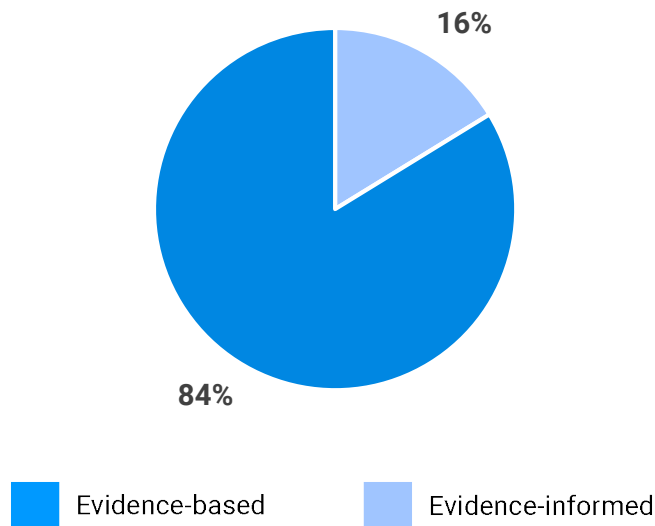
Reading is the number one indicator of School Success. Please invest in the children of our community by donating to fund a child through our Imagination Library program. \$30 a year will mean that a local Fairfield County child will receive a book once a month, every month, until their fifth birthday.



## FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

### OUR INVESTMENT IN QUALITY

#### Expenditures of State Funds by Program Type



### ESTIMATION OF COST SAVINGS

Since inception, ABC County First Steps has leveraged **\$1,324,806** from sources outside of state government.

That's **\$0.41** for every state dollar.

## SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES BY STRATEGY

	State Funding	Federal Funding	Private Funding	In-Kind Contributions	Total
Parents as Teachers	\$58,198		\$18,705		\$76,903
1000 Books Before Kindergarten	\$8,422		\$416		\$8,838
Imagination Library	\$5,189		\$7,136	\$47,064	\$59,389
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$20,345	\$2,180	\$4,052		\$26,577
Scholarship Initiatives	\$67,853		\$58		\$67,911
Admin Functions	\$21,304		\$570		\$21,874
Core Functions	\$10,441				\$10,441
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$191,751</b>	<b>\$2,180</b>	<b>\$30,938</b>	<b>\$47,064</b>	<b>\$271,933</b>



## LEADERSHIP

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Lou Anne Atkerson, Program Coordinator

Keegan Johnson, Parent Educator

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