Parents as Teachers hosts ‘Library Night’
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.

---

**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
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 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 (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 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.

"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.

PAT IN FAIRFIELD COUNTY 2018-2019

33 families served
495 total home visits
Books are 100% free to any child in Fairfield County, from birth until their 5th 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

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
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.
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 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
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

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

---

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.
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

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

### 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

- Evidence-based
- Evidence-informed
LEADERSHIP

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Eric Robinson, Board Chair
Darreyl Davis, Vice-Chair
Sandi Gratic, Secretary
Connie Pete, Legislative Liaison
Jill W. Coleman
Allison Blackmer
Jimmy Burroughs
Rebecca Douglas
Kay Hensley
Dee Mattox
Sarah McMaster
T'Sheila Praileau
Misty Roberts
Mac Russell
Melyssa Shepard
Michelle Taylor

STAFF

Patti Wilkes, Executive Director
Lou Anne Atkerson, Program Coordinator
Keegan Johnson, Parent Educator

CONTACT US

PO Box 215, 101 N Congress Street, Winnsboro, SC 29180 | (803) 635-1590